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PEACE,
WAR, AND ADVENTURE:

AN

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

GEORGE LAVAL CHESTERTON,

FORMERLY OF

THE FIELD TRAIN DEPARTMENT OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY,
SUBSEQUENTLY A CAPTAIN IN THE ARMY OF COLUMBIA, AND AT
PRESENT GOVERNOR OF THE HOUSE OF CORRECTION
AT COLD BATH FIELDS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

WHEN he, whose vocation is not that of authorship, emerges from seclusion, and confronts the world as a writer, it may not unreasonably be asked, what are the motives which actuate the step? Being precisely in that position, I deem it right to assign some grounds for the course I am pursuing.

First then, novelists and poets daily task their imagination to devise stories fraught with perilous catastrophes. They alternately weave and unravel the possible incidents of life, in order to shape them into tales of startling interest. They strive to excite the minds, and to pique the curiosity of their readers by cunningly contrived fictions, thus made the medium for glowing descriptions of scenery, for toils, entanglements, and rescue from fanciful dangers. If, therefore, such highly-wrought fables awaken a keen interest, and induce the willing devotion of hours to their perusal, for the mere sake of passing amuse-

ment, it may not appear altogether strange that the writer of the following pages, when urged importunately by indulgent friends, should by the delineation of actual facts, and varied experience, lay claim to some portion of public attention.

Enterprises of rare occurrence, perils in distant and savage localities, and extrication the least probable from the last possible extremity, appear, *primâ facie*, to embody all the materials calculated to instruct and to amuse. The manner in which the tale is developed, and the scenes and incidents illustrated, would appear to constitute the real difficulty. In those respects I have sought to employ a simple narrative style, devoid of inflated pretension, and to relate the events of my life, in their due order, without exaggeration, adopting the autobiographical form in deference to the counsel of experienced advisers.

There is, however, a second and perhaps more powerful reason for the task I have undertaken. The British public can hardly fail to listen with sensibility to a review of the sacrifices, the heroism, and the hapless fate of whole masses of their countrymen, whom a love of liberty, and a spirit of adventure, had allured to the distant provinces of Spanish America. Their services and sufferings are worthy of record, while it is due to our national reputation that the

futile tactics of incompetent leaders should be exposed, and the miscarriage of British co-operation ascribed to its real cause. The aggregate of the auxiliary force despatched by private enterprise from this country was computed at 6,000 men, of whom the merest fraction survived to relate the trials and miseries of the conflict; while I, individually, appear in this, and in other adventures, to have providentially borne a charmed life.

Again, as governor of this vast prison, where for nearly twenty-four years I have had so wide a field for the contemplation and study of the criminal classes, I cannot but conceive that I have much to disclose calculated to interest mankind in general, and philanthropists in particular. Here, therefore, is another fruitful theme for useful disquisition, and a subject of momentous interest to society at large.

With these pleas before me, I think I can hardly be charged with vainly intruding upon public attention, and, with such grounds of justification, I respectfully consign my Memoirs to the press.

G. L. CHESTERTON.

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PEACE, WAR, AND ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND OPENING PROSPECTS.—AN UNLOOKED-FOR INTRODUCTION, WITH ITS RESULTS.—MILITARY ASPIRATION, ITS ENCOURAGEMENT, AND SUBSEQUENT QUALIFICATION.—THE FIELD TRAIN DEPARTMENT, ITS CHARACTER AND DUTIES.—ORDERS FOR FOREIGN SERVICE, PROCRASTINATION, FINAL EMBARCATION, AND DEPARTURE.

PERSONAL narrative seems, by universal example, to require a detail of early history, uninteresting, perhaps, until, by progressive stages, it conducts its subject to more stirring and adventurous incidents. Complying with this custom, more for the sake of conventionality than of necessity, I announce my birth to have occurred at the metropolitan suburb of Brompton, where I passed my childish days, until I was first initiated into the mystery of letters at a preparatory school at Putney. At an academy at Knightsbridge I may first be said to have tasted of the Hyperian spring.

Of parentage and family I can make no pompous

boast, although an indefatigable genealogist might doubtless (judging from my complexion) trace my descent to the Saxon Heptarchy. My father, however,—himself a well-educated and highly talented man,—appreciated education, and resolved to confer that inestimable boon upon his sons.

We were consequently assigned to the care of the Reverend William Hurn, vicar of Debenham in Suffolk, where our classical studies progressed. That gentleman was regarded as an accomplished scholar, but he was, at the same time, an enthusiastic Calvinist, and gloried in the social proscription, which at that period was the lot of ardent professors of religion.

There I received a lesson which thenceforth taught me to mistrust the mere semblance of sanctity, for in private our tutor was austere and unjust to his pupils, and was for ever so earnestly wrestling with obscure doctrinal points, that at length, dissenting from the tenets of the Established Church, he relinquished his living, and seceded altogether from her. By this step he exhibited his undoubted sincerity, by the voluntary sacrifice of his temporal interests. He subsequently became the minister of a Dissenting chapel at Woodbridge, where he died a prey to doubt and vacillation.

During my sojourn at Debenham, the war, which

terminated in the dethronement of Napoleon, was fiercely raging, and from every available source, — chiefly from “Bell’s Weekly Messenger,” — we schoolboys gleaned some faint intelligence of passing events. I remember the excitement produced in my mind by the inspiring addresses of the numerous Juntas of Spain, and the ardour which burned within me to aid that patriotic people. The battle of Vimeira, the convention of Cintra, the subsequent battle of Talavera, and the host of incidents connected with them, penetrated the dull and listless recesses of a provincial school, and the names of Wellesley, Cuesta, Blake, Castaños, de la Romana, Ballasteros, and others, became themes for our youthful disquisitions.

My affection, however, was linked to the Royal Navy. My mind was at that time familiarised with the exploits of naval heroes, and the achievements of Drake, the daring of Blake, the untimely fate of Cloudesley Shovel, and the later glories of Nelson, absorbed my waking dreams. By dwelling with enthusiasm upon these subjects, I became impressed with the stern necessity for my individual exertions. My father, who was at that time at Dover, was consequently one morning refreshed by an epistle from me, expressive of my ardent thirst for naval distinction.

What "handsome reward" should I not be willing to offer for a copy of that inestimable production. Alas! it is lost, and, with it, as rare a specimen of boyish inspiration and devotion as ever stained the pure lineaments of paper. I remember the import, though not the exact phraseology: it was redolent with patriotism and peril, glory and the grave, and a thousand expletives demonstrating my disordered taste.

It so happened that my father had just visited a lugger, which, after sustaining a sanguinary fight with a French privateer, had conducted its prize into the port of Dover, and he wrote an answer to my remarkable epistle, in which he reproved my ignorant folly, and drew such a picture of wounded men, blood-stained decks, shattered rigging, and yawning timbers, that my spirit quailed under the fierce reality, and I began to apply more soberly to the dry, though dangerless, details of scholastic routine.

I had scarcely left school, and returned to Brompton, ere I lost my father; and, by his death, myself and two brothers and a sister were cast comparatively friendless upon the world. My mother (a Frenchwoman, and sister of the French General Laval,) was provided for by our joint exertions, until, by the providential interposition of a relative,

her children had the happiness to be especially recommended to the late Countess of Egmont, then Viscountess Perceval. That exalted and remarkable lady (whose early attachment to the late Queen Caroline subsequently involved her in a series of political difficulties which embittered her closing years), was one of the few women of rank whose life was devoted to expansive benevolence. She was at that time regarded as an accomplished and elegant woman of fashion, and was as beautiful and fascinating in appearance, as she was generous in heart.

A day was appointed for our presentation to her, at her house in Curzon Street; and, attired in deep mourning, we formed, at our youthful ages, an interesting *groupe* that moved our kind patroness to tears, and excited her utmost sympathy for our condition. She promptly expressed her intention to exert her interest on our behalf.

My own exertions, in some shape, being indispensable, I had just procured a situation in a banking house; but, expressing to her Ladyship my distaste for the uninviting employment of a banker's clerk, I meekly suggested my desire to bear arms, and she instantly decided that I should enter the army, and devised the channel through which that step should be accomplished. Her relative, Spencer Perceval, was then Prime Minister, and moreover,

her acquaintance, and influence with other ministers and public functionaries had enabled her so to exercise her active benevolence in the procurement of commissions, and appointments of various kinds, that a host of people were indebted to her for their prospects in life, and she jocosely termed her numerous *protégés*, "the Percival Legion." With the sweetest imaginable smile she informed me of my enrolment in that chosen band, and from that moment the formality of the patroness gave way to the cordiality of the friend; and, with a condescension illustrative of her noble qualities, she thenceforth loaded me with kindnesses for which I could render no adequate thanks. The recollection of them, however, has made me bless and revere her memory.

I was a frequent visitor at her house, and had the honour of mixing with her company; and as I was boyishly bashful, she one day read me a lecture on the weakness of *mauvaise honte*, and made me enter and retire from the drawing-room repeatedly, until I had acquired an approved style. She imparted practical instruction in these social arts by her own example; entering the room, and approaching me as her representative, particularly impressing upon me the desirableness, in a youth, of observing an easy but modest deportment, and of sedulously avoiding a bold familiarity towards those who were

decidedly of superior age or station. Considering that I was an unknown lad, and she one of the *élite* of fashion, some notion may be formed of the amiable qualities of her heart.

She was immersed in correspondence, and, quite regardless of trouble, would write letter after letter with an aptitude and celerity contrasting strikingly with the *gaucherie* and sloth of those who, leading a life of idleness, can never spare time for anything.

I once had the misfortune, by a hasty and pettish remark to offend her, and so sharp and instant was her reproof, that alarmed at my rashness, I burst into tears. She promptly melted into kindness, seemed actually distressed by my boyish anguish, and extending her hand, with a mild and impressive lecture, almost implored me to be comforted. Amongst the frequent evidences of selfish and sordid disregard of the interests and feelings of others, what an admirable picture was this of a lady, of high station and princely associations, encumbering herself with toil, and often with embarrassments, in order to gladden the hearts, and advance the welfare of those who, in the general acceptance of the world, had no earthly claim upon her benevolence. If I were to descend to minute particulars, I could tell tales of her disinterested exertions for comparative

strangers, that would ensure for her memory the honour which is enshrined in my own heart.

Shortly after our first introduction to this admirable woman, she procured for my elder brother a situation in the Bank of England, Lord Perceval, at her instance, becoming his surety. My younger brother received, through her interest, an appointment in the Victualling Office at Chatham, and my sister was consigned to the guardianship of a lady of her selection.

Meanwhile, my poor mother (whose maternal fears were daily excited by the details of carnage in the Peninsula) was appalled at the notification of my prospective career, and expressed so much dread of my choice, and betokened so much anguish of mind, that Lady Perceval determined to see, and strive to reconcile her to the project. Her ladyship's eloquence, however, failed to subdue a mother's agony, and, touched by her unfeigned repugnance and alarm, my patroness suggested a medium course, whereby my thirst for travel and adventure might be gratified, and my mother's consternation be at least assuaged. A military "department" instead of a regiment (the difference being carefully explained) was the proposition, and the alternative being accepted, an application was promptly made to the Earl of Mulgrave, then Master-General of the

Ordinance, and an answer speedily returned that his Lordship would embrace the earliest opportunity to appoint me to the Field Train Department of the Ordnance; an arm of the service which guarded and supplied the munitions of war for the army in general, and the Royal Artillery in particular, and which was in fact a subsidiary branch of that noble service, whose uniform it wore.

I had quitted the city on the intimation of my future destination, but the appointment not being as speedy as my ardent expectations desired, I pursued the advice of my kind patroness to court activity in any useful shape, rather than continue idle, and was fortunately enabled profitably to employ my time in another establishment for a limited period. I was industriously engaged in a complicated mass of mercantile data, when, in the early part of February, 1812, I suddenly received the first official letter ever addressed to me, announcing my enrolment in the Field Train Department, and requiring me to repair to Woolwich forthwith, and report myself to the Chief Commissary. I turned my back upon the smoky city with ready alacrity, and providing myself with letters from my patroness, I promptly repaired to my new head-quarters, and placed myself, at her desire, under the friendly guidance of Colonel Nicholls, of the Royal Marines, whose recent ex-

exploits at the island of Anholt had made him a man of no mean note.

My first introduction to that gallant officer had been at Lord Perceval's house; and on that occasion Lady Perceval had assured him that I was one of those who thought "gunpowder most excellent snuff." He received me with hospitable courtesy, and the following day accompanied me to the Grand Dépôt, where it was soon known that I was a *protégé* of the Viscountess; and her name insured me as warm a reception as my youth and station could have led me to anticipate.

The Field Train was a corps of such useful pretensions, that but for the trail of corruption which then indelibly cast its slime over all our national establishments, it might have been entitled to the character of a valuable auxiliary to the army; but to suit the patronage of the day, it was augmented to threefold its legitimate proportions, and was consequently divested of its genuine claim to honour. Under its auspices, however, I was inducted into the mystery of packing "brigades" (they are now called "batteries"), a process which would surprise the uninitiated by the multifarious details of the paraphernalia. The nature of battering ordnance and its equipments, the rules for counting piles for shot and shells, the calibre of guns, and the proportionate

weight of cartridges, with numerous other occult details, engrossed my attention for several weeks. I was greatly reconciled to these new subjects by a neat, nay, handsome uniform, ornamented by gold embroidery, which, with a cocked hat and flowing plume, duly influenced my youthful mind, and indemnified me for the more exciting incidents of military parade and tactics. After performing various marches about England, to supply sundry depôts with their annual spring ammunition, I was shortly warned to prepare for foreign service; and in June, 1812, received orders to embark for Cadiz, on board a large transport, yclept "The London," then lying at Deptford.

At that period notice to embark was no earnest of an early departure, for the unfortunate expectant to sail was sure, on every inquiry, to learn that "in a day or two" the vessel would weigh anchor. Thus was I kept in a most unsettled condition, and many were the visits which I paid to Deptford before I obtained any satisfactory intelligence as to a positive departure.

Embarked, however, at Deptford; and dropping down the river, a further anchorage at Gravesend, and again at the Downs, with all their tantalising tardiness, fairly exhausted patience. At length we made Portsmouth; and there learned that we must

await the convenience of the Admiralty in the appointment of "convoy," *i. e.* a ship of war, to escort a fleet of transports and merchantmen in safety. Here again, the slow arrival of various craft ensured a still more consuming delay, until, at length, the Pique frigate numbered at least 150 vessels to protect to Lisbon, Cadiz, and Gibraltar; and on the 23d of July, 1812, we sailed for our respective destinations.

CHAP. II.

THE SHIP.—YOUTHFUL IMPRESSIONS CONCERNING IT.—WEIGHING ANCHOR.—THE OCEAN.—ARRIVAL AT CADIZ.—DISEMBARCATION.—THE CITY.—THE ALAMÉDA.—ASPECT OF THE ISLA DE LEON.—NEGLECTED PORTIONS OF THE CITY.—THE MONSTER MISSILES OF THE FRENCH, AND THE RESORT FOR SAFETY OF THE INHABITANTS.

How anxious are the anticipations of the youthful voyager, and with what inspiring earnestness does he behold the novel preparations which prevail! Never can I forget the impression made upon me, when, at the early age of eighteen, and with all the sanguine ardour of youthful promise I embarked on board this transport bound to Cadiz. I had gazed with eager curiosity on the vessel: it was the first I had ever boarded. The masts, sails, rigging, and entwining haulyards, had alternately commanded my notice, and excited boyish inquiries. I descended to the cabin, dwelling with ecstasy upon its neat appearance, and convenient adaptation; made choice of a vacant berth, and was enchanted with the snug and cozy prospect of reclining in so novel a dormitory. In short, I dwelt with delight upon everything calculated to arouse satisfaction, never suffering the incon-

veniences of a voyage once to flit across my fervent imagination.

The happy hour of departure from Portsmouth, after a long and torturing suspense, having indeed arrived, hark! what sounds are those which so rudely disturb my day-dreams? I ran with inquiring eagerness to ascertain the cause, and found the lately settled order of the deck converted into a scene of indescribable bustle. "The signal to weigh," floated from the towering mainmast of the "Commodore," (our guide and protector) and was quickly noticed by the "answering pendants" of the fleet, and by hasty preparations to obey the welcome summons. And now, the ends of numberless ropes, which before had been neatly coiled, and suspended from pins arranged for the purpose, were thrown down in negligent confusion on the deck. The sails loosed from their temporary fetters, were dangling and heavily flapping to and fro. The captain, through his speaking-trumpet (a rude contrast to the boatswain's whistle in a man-of-war) hoarsely communicated his orders, while the practised crew, with bounding alacrity, sprang to execute them: some hastening with the tact of adepts up the quivering rigging, others lending their utmost strength to some designated line, while others again, warned by the sonorous notes of a messmate's song, heaved with simultaneous pre-

cision at the windlass to weigh the ponderous anchor. And now one hundred and fifty vessels expand their canvass to the breeze, and follow in the track of their majestic leader.

The port in which we so lately lay, became each moment more indistinct, until the very land itself assumed the semblance of a shadow. At this receding vision, the thirst for travel, the ideal joy of beholding unknown shores, the stoic insensibility with which I had relinquished the calm comforts of England, gave place to an intensity of feeling too deep for utterance; and, in spite of predetermined fortitude, my eyes were moist with tears. On after occasions, of quitting other ports where bitter cares, and even danger and unhappiness, had marked my sojourn, I have never been able to subdue the strong emotion which such receding objects impart to a contemplative mind. There, at least, had shelter and protection been experienced, but Heaven only could foreknow my future fate. In this first instance, on quitting my native shore, I prayed, and oh, how fervently, that blessings might be wafted to that peaceful strand!

What uninitiated mind has not been aroused by the contemplation of the mighty ocean, with its boundless scope, and everlasting surges! When, having ploughed the way through the light and

sickly hues that appear to discolour the waters proximate to land, varying in shade with the succession of unequal soundings, how will not the heart of the novice swell with excitement, and his eyes peer abroad to gratify the yearning after all the natural phenomena which tend to break the dull monotony of nautical existence.

With me the most restless anxiety prevailed to miss no one object of interest. Imagination was ever on the wing, and pondering over some fresh development. The shoals of the frolicking porpoise; the less numerous, but more heavily rolling grampus; the terrific shark, slowly progressing with his fin above the water; the ocean birds, whirling their fantastic flight, and screeching in inharmonious concert! Where southern shores lie not remotely distant, there also abound the beautiful and delicate stormy petrels, by sailors profanely yclept "Mother Carey's Chickens." Their free nature spurns captivity. They will not brook the tamer's devices, for they invariably pine and die under restraint. I watched the untiring flight, and ceaseless labours for subsistence of these lovely birds with special admiration; and deem them, even now, to form one of the sweetest specimens of natural history.

Once, in the Bay of Biscay, during a calm we were suddenly startled by the reverberating efforts of

a whale, spouting up the water, and throughout the night was I kept awake by this strange novelty. I could not sleep, so fully was I surcharged with ambition to see the leviathan of the deep.

All these hitherto unknown objects filled me with wonderment, and extorted such puerile exclamations and remarks, that my companions agreed in designating me a "Johnny Newcome;" and I was the good-humoured object of their raillery, so completely novel was all around to me, and so "refreshing" and *naïve* were my ceaseless inquiries and comments. I am often amused at the recollection of the inflated dignity with which I gazed at the lofty elevation of Cape Finisterre. I had actually beheld a foreign land, and reflected with scornful pity upon the ignorance of those whose grovelling adhesion to home had left them so immeasurably behind me. So true it is that the least instructed are ever the most arrogant.

Our voyage was tediously long, owing more to the prevalence of calms than to adverse winds; but neither upon this, nor upon any subsequent occasion, have I had the slightest experience of sea-sickness.

On the morning of the 24th August the first sight of the sea, now changed in hue, imparted the welcome intimation that our voyage was all but accom-

plished; and we soon became enraptured with the objects around us.

Cadiz was, and doubtless still is, a splendid city, unrivalled in site, and in objects of surrounding interest. No description of it can be too oft repeated, for it is indeed a matchless locality. The bay, which was at least twelve miles in length, and five or six miles in breadth, was defended by a long and dangerous reef, called the Porpoise Rocks, upon which stood a handsome lighthouse, with an effective revolving light. Its safety was ensured, and the city generally strengthened, by the cannon of Fort Catalina, a fortification of imposing aspect. On the left was the Andalusian Main, studded, as you passed the mouth of the Guadalquivir, and advanced into the bay, with the towns of San Lucar, Santa Maria, Puerto Real, and the famed Trocadero. Beyond these, in the distance, was the prominent town of Medina Sidonia, remarkable for its scenic effect. Situate midway, up a commanding mountain slope, it overlooked a wide expanse of country, glanced over these maritime towns, and the bay, and city, the Ciudad de San Fernando, then called "the Isla," and, beyond them, as far as vision could extend.

The choice residences of Cadiz fronted the bay or ocean, and were lofty, well-designed, and remarkable for their excessive whiteness. The city occupied an

enormous space on the right, and was constructed upon a rocky extremity of the Isla de Leon; her broad, massive, and circumambient walls denoting her strength as a fortress. The cathedral, then unfinished, and unappropriated to religious uses, and the numerous magnificent churches, displayed their elevation above the houses, while the extensive bomb-proof barracks of Santa Helena and San Roque, on the land side, and the regularly planted trees of the Alameda or public promenade, on the opposite end of the city, completed the exterior *coup-d'œil* of this superb locality. The city of San Fernando lay at the utmost extremity of the bay, where the river Santi Petri formed its insular character, and upon this spot the communication with the main was maintained by a bridge so strongly fortified as to defy assault.

No sooner had we been visited by the sanitary guardians of the port than we were boarded by a vendor of fruit, who displayed to our longing eyes various kinds of the rich produce of the Spanish soil, and we, poor simple souls, unhesitatingly paid *one dollar* for a largish basket of Muscatel grapes, that very morning plucked, and wearing the luscious bloom for which they are remarkable. We chuckled over our bargain, with the epicurean delight of those whose long detention on ship board had familiarised

them with the dry unsavoury rations of the ocean, little imagining that of the sum we had paid, seven-eighths were the profit of the wary trader.

At eleven o'clock, on a sultry day in August, we landed. For the first time I heard an unknown language in general use, and beheld swarthy visages, broad and uncouth hats, and sandals fixed by leathern thongs to the naked feet. Muleteers attended to their spirited mules, which kept up a deafening noise by the ceaseless motion of their heads strung with bells variously attuned. Numerous porters were actively engaged; boatmen were simultaneously shouting for hire, and the landing passenger could with difficulty avoid the recumbent skins of oil and wine scattered o'er the quay, which by their dirty, offensive appearance excited disgust in the mind of a stranger.

The gates (guarded by a tattered band of soldiers and douaniers armed with iron rods to pierce and probe the legitimate character of the loads that entered the city) being passed, I beheld an equally grotesque scene in the streets, which, by the way, were conveniently shaded from the solar beams by the contracted space, and the elevation of the houses. At each corner of every street sat a vendor busily employed frying fish in oil, a custom then prevalent in every sizeable town of Spain, which caused an odour all-pervading, only neutralized by the general

practice of filthily defiling the handsome porches of the houses, and which, in so sultry a climate, really constituted a foul nuisance. Men, bearing small casks of water on their backs, melodiously called out “agua del Puerto,” notifying that the cool beverage they sold, at a farthing the glass, was from the port of Santa Maria, famed for its limpid springs. Here and there was to be seen some plodding female, whose dingy *mantilla*, or bonnet and shawl combined, denoted her a member of the operative class, as such only would encounter the beams of the noon-day sun. Groups of Algerine sailors in their singular costume (of whom this port had then no lack) were ranging the streets in quest of pleasure, and friars, in the coarse and flea-harboursing garments of their numerous orders, served to complete the novel spectacle.

In the evening I sallied forth to view the city, and a more minute examination of its beauties failed not to excite renewed admiration. Hastening to join the promenading throng on the far-famed Alameda, we passed groups of holy friars — Carthusian, Dominican, and Franciscan ; whose portly condition bespoke the good cheer of their establishments. I could not but remark that the knotted cords with which each was girded, ostensibly for the purpose of self-castigation, in no instance appeared to be the worse for use.

But lo! we have reached the thronged Alaméda (situate at the extremity of the Muralla), with its ample breadth, ornamental foliage, and an expansive seaward prospect; and here our sight revelled in the rich display of Andalusian beauty. This bewitching scene presented no false illusion, but, on the contrary, embodied all that rich attire, a galaxy of feminine loveliness, and the grace and fascination of this enchanting race, could furnish. Successive travellers and poets have exhausted their descriptive powers on the rare combinations which here inspire the heart; and I am bold to aver that no lovelier spectacle could anywhere challenge attention. The gait peculiar to Spanish ladies, and which they styled "*gracia*," was often carried to excess, and embodied as much voluptuousness as could possibly be exhibited in the mere walk. The incessant motion of the fan was quite an acquired art, and was practised equally in the salon, or on the promenade. The light attire of these exquisite *belles*, their tasteful mantilla, and their generally interesting (some would say, rather coquettish) deportment, with the surpassing beauty of their faces, contrasted singularly with the ungainly attributes of the other sex. Indeed, a Spaniard once candidly avowed to me that he marvelled at the loveliness of the Spanish fair,

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when compared with the “ugliness” (that was his word) of the Spanish men.

I had not long witnessed this animating scene before the tolling of the vesper bell caused an instantaneous halt, and commanded universal silence. The men taking off their hats, and the ladies shading their faces with their fans, made the sign of the Cross, and, in prayerful attitude, absorbed a minute or two in devotion. When the bell ceased tolling, the sign of the cross was repeated; the cavaliers, making obeisance to their surrounding friends, resumed their promenade, exclaiming, “Buena tarde,” or, Good evening; and the whole pursued their walk and conversation. I since ascertained that in every part of the city, and indeed throughout Spain, whether in cities, towns, or villages, this observance of the vesper prayer prevailed; and it appeared to me to be a redeeming trait in the religious degeneracy of that declining land, that at a stated moment there should arise a simultaneous thanksgiving to the Deity, for the protection afforded through the day.

As night approached, the company retired: the ladies sought their homes, and prepared for their *tertulias*, or *soirées*, and the cavaliers who were not disposed to pay homage to their inamoratas at the *tertulias*, repaired to the handsome and commodious *neverias*, or coffee-houses, with which the city

abounded. A *tertulia* was an evening assembly, the amusements of which consisted, as usual elsewhere, of conversation, cards, and dancing. The first presented the only genuine opportunity of reciprocal communication by lovers, who were at other times debarred from the privilege of *tête-à-tête*. The second was followed principally by old Dons, who, with their embroidered coats and crosses, added not a little to the *éclat* of the party; and the last enlisted most of the young, and was inspired by the notes of a harp or piano, played by some amateur. There was a niggardly peculiarity in these parties ill according with notions of English hospitality; viz., the neglect to provide refreshments of any kind, unless *iced water*, which might be had on application, may deserve the name.

Whether this custom was traditional, or had resulted from the pervading poverty, I cannot say. One advantage, however, was manifest, viz., the promotion of social intercourse unshackled by expense. These parties were seldom protracted to midnight: the usual hour for retiring being eleven o'clock.

The ordinary refreshments in those attractive places of resort, the *neverias*, were ices, chocolate, coffee, iced punch or milk, and a most palatable beverage made from the unripe grape, called "*agras*."

A band of music, men of all nations and costumes, and the universal cigar constituted the charms of the place. Here I became infected by the general habit, and promptly learned to inhale the fumes of "the salubrious weed."

To those disinclined to visit either tertulia or nevería, the Plaza de San Antonio, or public square, spacious and well-paved, proffered its inducements, and there great numbers promenaded to a late hour. From this place branched the Calle Ancha, or Broad Street, in which the best shops were situated, and on any occasion of general illumination this street made a grand display; every window and balcony being decorated with thick wax tapers, at least a yard in length, which superseded the use of lamps.

It is, however, incumbent on the faithful narrator to soil this generally favourable description, by the introduction of that part of the city which contained the poverty, vice, and indescribable filth of the lowest orders. The stranger, who visited once only this Gaditanian St. Giles, would be too deeply imbued with pity and disgust to attempt a second survey of such a pandemonium. It was one of the characteristics of the poorest of Spanish females to be always half naked, and filthy; and in the part of Cadiz allotted to the poor and vicious, these living monuments of human degradation were most numerous. Their

indolent male companions, in a state not a jot less discreditable, were listlessly stretched out, surrounded by noxious heaps of dirt; while children, fit miniatures of such brutish prototypes, completed the revolting spectacle. Small stoves of plaster consuming charcoal, garnished the outside of almost every house in these miserable districts; and fish, oil, tomatas, garlick, and pimento mingled their varied exhalations, with putrifying heaps, and the fumes of tobacco. This fusion of odours, augmented by the pervading heat of the climate, constituted a nuisance too foul for exaggeration.

Every observant traveller of that day (I trust the modern tourist can tell a different tale) must be aware of the disgusting service then rendered to each other amongst this class, by a mutual search in the neglected hair. This practice was too prevalent to excite surprise, and at once proclaimed the dirty condition of a vast portion of the Spanish population.

Issuing from the city of Cadiz on the land side you beheld an open tract of ground, cultivated by the aid of artificial irrigation, and having traversed this area, you journeyed on a narrow causeway, with the ocean on your right, and saline marshes, skirted by the bay, on your left. This road, nine miles in length, led to the small, but handsome, city of San Fernando. Here the land expanded, and the neigh-

bouring eminences were fortified for the defence of that part of the Isla de León.

Beyond these, on the right, having crossed the river Santi Petri, you shortly gained the dense pine forest and laurelled field of Barrossa; and on the left, equally across the river, stood the village and fertile neighbourhood of Chiclana. On the opposite side of the bay, at Puerto Santa Maria, the scenery teemed with rural loveliness, and enchanting orange groves, and floral development on every side excited the delight of the visitors.

During the Peninsular war Cadiz, and its vicinity were the scenes of conflict and of carnage, and rendered both sufficiently celebrated to justify a more lengthened notice than a less-famed locality might exact. The importance of the city to either of the belligerents was evidenced by the stupendous efforts of the French, under Marshal Soult and Victor, to subdue it, and the obstinate and successful defence of it by the British. A fleet of respectable strength, and a flotilla of gun-boats, occupied the bay, and harassed the sea-board of the enemy, while strong garrisons at Cadiz, and San Fernando, and the effective condition of Fort Puntales, and other intervening works, bespoke a determination to leave no assailable point of doubtful strength. The mortar, now standing as a trophy in

St. James's Park, indicates the surpassing desire, on the part of the French, to gain their object.

Shells were thrown from such gigantic pieces to a distance hitherto unequalled, and an occasional range of four and a half miles was said to have been accomplished. The shattered fronts of the handsome houses near the principal Muralla, and the indentations and patches in its broad surface by huge shells, impelled by those monster mortars, exhibited at once the well-founded alarm of the inhabitants for their personal safety, and the futility of having attempted the capture of the redoubtable city by such ruthless means.

Those who repose in security in these fair realms little dream of the distractions and discomforts of the besieged. I have before noted the *bomb proof* barracks of Santa Helena and San Roque. Thither women and children nightly flocked for protection, and the passages, and, indeed, every step of the broad staircases, were crowded with these helpless objects, assured here at least of safety from the merciless missiles of the enemy.

The victory of Salamanca had necessitated the retreat of the besieging forces; and I had just arrived in time to witness the joy of the enfranchised city, and to behold the preparations for the march upon Seville. That city was captured with little risk,

although the loss of the lives of Colonel Duncan, commanding the artillery, by the explosion of a powder mill, and that of Lieutenant Brett, of that arm, who had so long and gallantly defended Fort Puntales—the most exposed position throughout the siege—were the subjects of deep regret to this part of the army.

CHAP. III.

VISIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO CADIZ. — THE WELCOME HE RECEIVED AND THE RIVALRY HE EXCITED. — THE VICINITY EXPLORED. — THE CHASE. — BARROSSA AND ITS ENVIRONS, — A MEDITATED DUEL. — AN EXCHANGE FOR MORE DISTANT SERVICE. — A FRESH VOYAGE. — GIBRALTAR, AND AN UNLOOKED-FOR CASUALTY. — THE MEDITERRANEAN. — CORSAIRS. — LIEUTENANT DE ROVEREA, HIS DETENTION AT SEA, AND AFTER MISFORTUNES. — ADVENT TO CARTHAGENA.

AT the termination of the campaign of 1812, Lord Wellington repaired to Cadiz, then the seat of the Spanish Government, in order to concert measures for a more vigorous co-operation of the two armies. Upon this occasion, the roar of cannon which announced his arrival, and the general illumination, the fêtes and reviews which succeeded, together with the crowds which thronged the streets in order to catch a passing glimpse of the renowned chief, testified the homage to his achievements, which even the national jealousy of Spaniards could not subdue. Here I first beheld the hero of a hundred fights; and although his dignified deportment, and sun-burnt visage (coupled, doubtless, with the fame of his career), produced an impression upon my mind, yet

the Spanish costume of the "Duke de Ciudad Rodrigo," so much less effective than the uniform of an English chief, detracted greatly from my youthful estimate of the appearance of a victorious commander, and produced a corresponding disappointment. Still, the *éclât* of his last achievement at Salamanca, and its great results, had so exalted his military reputation, that I regarded him with a species of awe which I cannot forget.

That his mission to Cadiz had been successful, was speedily certified by the splenetic outburst of General Ballasteros, who had acquired some repute as a Spanish leader, and whose angry address to the nation on the Duke's appointment to the chief command of the Spanish forces, teemed with malignant jealousy, and richly merited the decree of banishment to Ceuta, which followed its promulgation.

While stationed at Cadiz I visited the circumjacent country, threaded the orange groves of Puerto Santa Maria, shot larks in the cultivated area which lies contiguous to the city, and first imbibed a taste for the chase, which has ever since predominated. The officers stationed at San Fernando conceived a notion that hunting was practicable, and a few hounds, procured from England, were located at "The Kennel," at Chiclana. On one smiling morn I was enticed to this inviting neighbourhood, mounted on a raw-

boned mare, warranted to carry me safely, and a speedy "find," imparted to my comprehension the first music of the excited pack, consisting, in this instance, of three and a half couples. The scent being warm, and the hounds eager, we dashed away at clipping pace. The fences, few and far between, opposed little obstacle to our onward course, and our impetuous career to the field of Barrossa was a subdued imitation of the mighty energy which had previously sanctified that immortal ground. (The brook, or (as it was termed in the recital of the battle) the river, caused me more alarm than the contest for its possession excited in the gallant 67th regiment; for, approaching it at full speed, in the wake of other cattle, my mare, redoubling her eagerness, impetuously charged it, and, although the terror and anxiety, natural to a novice, agitated my frame, I clung closely to my saddle, and only recovered from my consternation on finding the bound successful, and myself not unhorsed. At Barrossa we lost our fox, but my initiation into the mysteries of the "noble sport" was hallowed by the recollection of the classic arena which honoured my *débüt*; and I have ever since cherished a lively interest in this chivalrous recreation.

On a subsequent occasion, in company with some friends, I traversed much of the same ground, and

examined with more nicety the field and forest of Barrossa. There still remained numerous indications of the past combat. Fragments of muskets, broken shafts and splinters of waggons, torn belts and pouches, with abundance of gun flints, were strewn around. One unburied corpse lay as it had fallen; the uniform, however, had become too colourless from weather, to proclaim the corps or nation. The agony of death was, however, still traceable, by the upraised lip disclosing a tooth of unchanged whiteness. In a locality where wolves were said to abound, we marvelled to find a body thus unmutilated.

From the forest we proceeded to the fishing hamlet of Conil, and at a wretched posada we sought for refreshments. The fare was limited to eggs and bacon, the latter so saturated with brine that we faced the arid country, on our return, tormented by a thirst equal to that of the African Desert travellers.

However, we did not retrace our steps until we had contrived to reach the headland overlooking a wide expanse of ocean, and the renowned Bay of Trafalgar, where, with throbbing hearts, almost at one glance we surveyed two opposite scenes of our country's triumph. Beyond the fame attached to these localities there was little in their aspect to claim admira-

tion. Indeed, considering the general level character of this district, "the heights of Barrossa" must be deemed to signify the somewhat abrupt uprise from the plain to the cliffs; for the lowlands were flat, open, cultivated, and hedgeless, while the forest displayed nothing more than a respectable density.

At Cadiz we received a practical proof that we were not in a land of religious toleration. A large room in the barracks of Santa Helena, had been selected and temporarily fitted for the purpose of Divine worship. There, Major-General Cooke, the commandant, and many officers of the garrison, with the few married ladies resident in the barracks, assembled, and the chaplain to the forces performed the customary sabbath service of the Church of England.

The room which had been thus chosen formed part of the external face of the buildings, and abutted upon a much-frequented public thoroughfare, leading to the land-port. Not many weeks were suffered to elapse ere the Spaniards got an inkling of the purport of the meeting. The service consequently was one Sunday interrupted by, at the outset, an inconsiderable throng, which, first by audible jeers, and next by bounding up and spitting in at the windows, attracted the notice of other passers by, until a tumultuous crowd of excited people shouted vociferously, and threatened to proceed to extremities.

A detachment of British soldiers was, by a hasty summons, marched to the spot; and with fixed bayonets, by their mere attitude and menacing advance made the malcontents retire in disorder. As it was quite undesirable that a religious feud should disturb the otherwise peaceful relations of allies, all further agitation was avoided, by the removal of our simple style of worship to a room of adequate capacity within the quadrangle. This was the only instance of overt hostility to us as "heretics," which I observed throughout my stay in Spain. The courtesy we received from the higher orders, and the hearty address of tradesmen and vendors, seemed externally to indicate the absence rather of intolerant sentiments towards us.

We could not fail to compare the solemn decorum of our funeral observances with the hurried and revolting spectacle of Spanish obsequies. The indecorous speed of the procession, the exposure to the public gaze of the ghastly countenance of the corpse, the scrubby appearance of the few bearers of wax torches, and the general slovenliness of the whole programme, impressed us with our superior estimate of what was calculated to hallow regret, and to impress the soul.

The celebration of high mass, and the imposing effect of censers and incense, could not be lost upon

the English observer; and in the instance of the funereal ceremonies, in the church of San Francisco, on the demise of the Spanish Admiral Gravina, nothing could exceed the pomp and magnificence of that impressive celebration, of which I was an eyewitness.

During my stay at Cadiz I narrowly escaped the casualties of a duel, and on grounds as dignified as many others which have characterised that senseless resort. With boyish silliness I had become enamoured of a pair of pigeons in the market-place, and purchased them. I constructed a rude pigeon-house from an old box, which I suspended without the window of my quarter in the barracks of Santa Helena. The early cooing and courtship of these birds disturbed the matin slumbers of a friend and neighbour, Mr. Minchin of the Field Train Department, who at first playfully, but at length seriously, insisted upon their removal. In proportion as he became positive I waxed obstinate, and at length acrimony was infused into the dispute, and terms exchanged, which we at length imagined nought but blood could expiate.

A challenge was the result, seconds were named, and the ensuing morning was appointed for the encounter. Happily for us both, my opponent's second was garrulous; and, consequently, the affair tran-

spired. At eleven o'clock at night we were both ordered under close arrest, and means were devised to effect a reconciliation, one of the conditions being the sacrifice of my pigeons : and it was perhaps fortunate for me that peace was purchased by so reasonable a concession ; for I subsequently learned that, in the course of the day, a friend who entered my antagonist's quarter, found him coolly occupied in moulding bullets for his pistols. Such was one of the many senseless pretexts, magnified into a point of honour, which has often caused the sacrifice of human life, and stained our Christian character.

I was, however, indebted to the subsequent fears of my rival, for emancipation from the circumscribed limits, and comparative thralldom of the Isla de Leon. Carthagena, about three days' sail from Gibraltar, was garrisoned by troops detached from Cadiz, and was an offshoot from that command. The periodical epidemic, which then so grievously afflicted Gibraltar and other places on the Mediterranean, had visited Carthagena with more than ordinary severity, and we heard, with consternation, of its ravages, and the lamentable sufferings and losses of the British troops there. Amongst others who were prostrated by disease was the Field Train Officer, and it consequently became necessary to detach a junior to his assistance. That service was

assigned to Minchin, and the man who had sat down to mould bullets and shape flints with perfect *sang-froid*, quailed under the apprehensions of an infected climate.

My thirst for travel and adventure was not yet slaked; on the contrary, the fascination of the incipient draught only increased the desire for a fresh libation, and I was not slow to test the possibility of an exchange with Minchin. He eagerly embraced the proposal, and my voluntary services being accepted, I received instructions to embark on board "The Gold Hunter" transport; and on a fine afternoon in the month of February 1813, I quitted the Bay of Cadiz.

The reflective sentiments which absorbed my mind, by the separation from friends, and in sacrificing the known security of a settled station, were enhanced by the ill-disguised regret of my companions, each of whom congratulated himself that he, at least, was spared the prospective horrors of a pestiferous coast. I was regarded as a sort of self-sacrificial victim, and doubts and apprehensions invaded my mind, and imparted gloom to my troubled spirit. The lights, however, which marked our proximity to Tarifa, and the pleasurable anticipation of the far-famed Gibraltar awakened buoyant interest, and fortified my wavering resolution.

We entered the Bay of Gibraltar that very evening; and the lateness of the hour compelled us to rest satisfied with the innumerable lights of the town, the darkening frown of the overshadowing rock, and the distant glimmer of the moon tinging with brightness my first glimpse of the Mediterranean, seen over the narrow barrier of the neutral ground. In the morning I repaired on shore, and hastened to present a letter of introduction to Captain Gordon of the Royal Artillery, with whom I breakfasted.

We had scarcely finished our meal than we beheld, from the window of his quarter, various vessels under weigh, and an inquiring glance showed indisputably the squadron to which "The Gold Hunter" (my vessel) was attached, beating out of the bay, under the convoy of a troop-ship. I could only take a hurried leave of my entertainer and hasten to the sally-port, where a boat was speedily engaged to bear me, if possible, to my craft. To accomplish this task we found impracticable; and I only succeeded in saving my passage by boarding a transport, "The Brutus," which formed one of the fleet.

The captain, on hearing my tale, courteously received me on board; and there, for three days and nights, attired in uniform, and destitute of the smallest change of raiment, I spent the time in anxiously watching "The Gold Hunter," and sighing

for some favourable approximation that might restore me to my temporary home. At length the wished-for opportunity occurred and I regained my crib, and with it the luxury of the contents of my port-manteau.

In the course of the voyage we narrowly escaped from the pillage of corsairs. At that epoch, when steam had not yet proffered its numberless advantages, unarmed craft were protected by men of war, whose progress was regulated by the fitful elements. However grimly armed, they could only move by Nature's varying permission; and the noblest and best-appointed became, necessarily, mere inert logs upon the breezeless ocean.

A calm, of settled quality, at this time prevailed, and the latine sails of Algerine rovers were nearing us by the potent strokes of numerous well plied oars. We saw our danger, and prepared for the worst. We anticipated momentary spoliage, and had even proceeded to transfer to our cravats as much specie as we could there contrive to stow away, when a fresh breeze providentially springing up, our commodore swept towards us, as a majestic deliverer, and our enemy set every sail, and strained every nerve to escape, and succeeded.

Our voyage henceforth was disastrously long, and was the more distressingly tardy, from the painful

position of (independently of the crew) my only sea companion, Lieutenant de Roverea, an officer of the regiment of De Watteville (one of the many foreign regiments at that time in the British service), whose sad history excited then, and has since sustained my utmost sympathy. Half of his regiment had been detached from Cadiz to Carthagera, where he became enamoured of a simple girl, whose mother was a vendor of chocolate. On the eve of his return to Cadiz, from whence the regiment was destined for Canada, passion prevailed over prudence, and De Roverea married this humble bourgeoisie, to the infinite scandal of his commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel de Mai, who carried his resentment to the extent of refusing him a passage for his wife.

Arrived at Cadiz, the hourly embarkation of his regiment was expected; and on his application for leave to return to Carthagera, it was only granted upon the hard condition (which he committed to writing) that, in case he should not return in time to embark with the regiment, he should forfeit his commission. The strong easterly gale which we encountered, was sufficiently tantalizing to the ordinary voyager; but to this poor young man it was positively afflicting, and at length while sailing on a tack very near to shore, he so earnestly besought the captain to lower a boat and land him, that the kind skipper

assented, and De Roverea and his servant were consigned to the coast, to all appearance within easy reach of Carthagera. I accompanied the poor fellow in the boat, and so anxious was he to reach the land, that braving the heavy surf, which forbade a too near approach, he jumped into the sea breast high, and blessed Heaven that he was at length freed from the capricious sport of the elements.

No sooner, however, were we rid of him, who Jonas-like, appeared to freight us with evil, than the wind veered round, and had there been light sufficient, we might that very evening have anchored in the harbour of Carthagera, and there in fact the following morning found us safely riding. Meanwhile, our unhappy friend, dripping and care-worn, toiled along a rugged, inhabitless coast, seeking in vain for a hamlet or hostelrie whereat to engage mules to carry him and his servant to his destination; but at length, with severe labour, and at no small cost, he procured the means of transport; and way-worn and spiritless, reached Carthagera late at night, to learn, with chagrin, the early, and easy, and costless arrival of his late more-favoured companions.

The sequel of this poor young man's history is fraught with melancholy. He lingered at Carthagera, daily and anxiously expecting some vessel to sail for Cadiz, or for some craft thitherward bound,

which might touch at this port; but for such he looked in vain, and at length set off with his bride (a delicately framed and simple girl) by an overland route to Gibraltar.

The journey was at once expensive and of painful and rugged character; and at length, after toiling over unfrequented paths rather than roads, and narrowly escaping the assaults of banditti, he safely reached his destination, only to learn with horror, that his regiment had sailed for Canada, and that his extorted resignation had been forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief. Without the support of British pay, he returned to Carthage, his wife *enceinte*, and he without provision or prospect. In this emergency he accepted the commission of a captain in the Spanish regiment de Kaiser, composed principally of Swiss; and vainly hoped for a subsistence, and promotion.

As the Spanish army was then little burdened with pay, he soon left that service from sheer necessity; and I subsequently saw him, first at Tarragona, and next at Gibraltar, wending his miserable way to England, in order to represent his case to the authorities, and to seek redress.

Reduced to penury, he was supported by charitable donations from those who learned his sad

condition, and were touched by his privations ; but I have never since been able to ascertain what was the ultimate fate of one so completely sacrificed to the tyranny which then so largely prevailed in the foreign regiments serving under the British flag.

CHAP. IV.

CARTHAGENA—ITS ANCIENT RENOWN AND PRESENT INSIGNIFICANCE.
 — FOREIGN REGIMENTS—THEIR WANT OF DISCIPLINE. — GENE-
 RAL DESERTION. — COURTS MARTIAL. — SENTENCE TO DEATH,
 AND OTHER PUNISHMENTS. — AN EXECUTIONER THREATENED
 WITH DEATH. — MURCIA AND ENVIRONS. — AN ESCAPE.

CARTHAGENA, the ancient cradle of the marine armaments of Spain, retained scarcely a vestige of its pristine grandeur. Not one solitary ship of war occupied the spacious basin of its well-planned arsenal. A few decayed square floating blocks, designed as batteries for the futile attempt to besiege Gibraltar, alone attested its past belligerent character. The bay, small but commodious, was protected by a formidable belt of craggy uplands, and defended on either hand by the towering fortifications of Galeros and St. Julian, and these two were supported by the still loftier fort of Atalaya; the three forming a triangular disposition of elevated frowning fortresses, which might well task the energies of an opposing enemy. The frontage of the bay disclosed the ruined condition of this once prosperous port; for the fine residences which lined the

Muralla, once occupied by wealthy merchants, were either uninhabited, or let in compartments to an inferior class of occupants, at almost nominal rents.

The superb marine college in its centre was denuded of its ancient appurtenances, a small class only of the Guardia Mariña maintaining a fading semblance of its early celebrity, while the major part of the structure was allotted for quarters to the British officers.

The muralla, or sea-wall, of solid construction, was strengthened by bastions of questionable equipment; since scarcely a gun carriage was really serviceable, and the whole appeared solely calculated to repel the restless surges that murmured at its base. It presented altogether (as, indeed, did the equipments of the entire fortress) as signal a sample of decrepitude and decay as the bitterest enemy of Spain could desire to contemplate.

The town was large and commodious, and contained many handsome churches, religious establishments, and capacious barracks and hospitals. The several puertas, or gates, were solid and imposing; and the Calle Mayor, or main street, was of most respectable dimensions, well furnished with shops and coffee-houses, and presented a fair specimen of trading activity.

The town was flanked by rocky mountains, and

was rendered fatally insalubrious by a wide extent of marsh on the land side, unimproved by drainage, and hence the periodical epidemic which proved so severe a scourge to its inhabitants. At least 10,000*l.* were expended by the British Government on the restoration of the tottering walls of Fort St. Julian ; this outlay forming one of the numberless useless items to account for the vast aggregate of the National Debt.

The possession, by the French army, of the impregnable Barcelona, under Suchet, and their generally strong hold of the provinces of Catalonia and Valencia, necessitated the occupation of Carthagena and Alicant by the British, in order to guard from the enemy's grasp the province of Murcia also. Its possession, indeed, would have been a serious misfortune for the allied cause, and would have greatly added to the strength of Napoleon, already sufficiently formidable on the eastern coast. By these precautions we kept enchained a vast French force, which would have otherwise been free to co-operate against Lord Wellington.

Hence these widely detached garrisons at Carthagena and Alicant, maintained at so large a cost to Great Britain ; but while other portions of the army were engaged in actual conflict with the enemy, it was a subject of deep mortification to most of us to

be thus supinely occupied in this lone garrison. Duty, however, exacted a ready obedience, and we could only sigh and serve where it demanded our presence. By such mischances, however, we and others, in the sequel, became debarred from the Peninsula medal, and hence a wide-spread disaffection upon that most tender subject, which no reasoning has been equal to dispel.

Arrived at Carthagena, I found that illness had so completely prostrated the Field Train officer, that a medical board had authorised his departure for England, even before he could deliver up his charge to a successor; and I not only found myself a humble chief, but also invested with the office of Paymaster to the Ordnance corps, and by the usage of the service entitled to extra pay, and to a captain's allowances. I believe it has rarely or never happened to one so young, whether in standing or years, to be thus clothed with these responsible duties; and in this instance at least, I reaped some reward from an adventurous spirit.

The 67th regiment then occupied Carthagena, and Colonel Prevost, of that regiment, was commander of the garrison.

Within a week of my arrival, however, that regiment was relieved by the regiment de Dillon, one of the numerous foreign corps at that time in the

British pay, and Lieutenant-Colonel de Renaud, a Frenchman, who could scarcely articulate a word of English, became our Commandant. He was a most amiable old man, but utterly unfit to command an ill-assorted regiment, composed of Frenchmen, Swiss, Germans, Poles, &c., and consequently the British flag was soiled by disputes amongst the officers, and by cruelty towards the men, which a man of mind and energy alone was calculated to correct. Many of the subalterns were Englishmen, and with one (Mr. Grindlay, afterwards in the 43rd Light Infantry,) I have long since maintained a close friendship.

Our association with this regiment (British by adoption) disclosed to our wondering minds its most anomalous management; and painful were the scenes which we were doomed to witness, owing to the cruel despotism that oppressed it. A hard and capricious rule, the absence of all incentive to the men, a mechanical observance of the formula of British exercises, and an adept practice in them, struck the observant stranger with intense pity for the enrolled, and with an admiration of the perfect adaptation to foreigners, of whatever class, of the British system. The soldier, however, was goaded to all his duties by a slavish dread of punishment, inflicted without judgment or mercy; and yet the external bearing of

the regiment extorted general praise. The consequence was a sullen obedience, combined with a mere mechanical observance of tactics.

A spirit of dismay and moroseness pervaded the entire body, and a desire to elude an intolerable thralldom became universal. To escape from this iron rule, a general thirst for enfranchisement prevailed, and numerous were the solitary attempts at desertion, frustrated and punished with a disregard for charity that shocked the humane. The blows inflicted with heavy sticks, the consignment to damp dungeons, and the unsparing application of the lash, aroused the indignation of the Christian observers. At length whole guards and pickets fled from their posts at night; and, on one occasion, as many as fifty men descended by various devices from the ramparts, and fled into the open country for escape.

Vain, alas! were their efforts; for communications with the provincial governors, and offers of reward for the apprehension of the fugitives, insured their recapture; and the novel sight of hordes of *quasi* British soldiers, marched as convicts, and brought to trial for desertion, shocked and disgusted the veritable British subject. The present Lieutenant-Colonel Grantham, R. A. (at that time a lieutenant, and on the staff as Town Major) was Judge Advocate of a court-martial for the trial of the delinquents,

which consisted of officers detached from various available stations, by order of Lord Wellington; and the whole of the unhappy fugitives were thus tried by the Articles of War, and sentenced to death.

Here let me do the gallant Chief the justice to remark, that he could not have known the internal tyranny of this foreign regiment; since his orders, promulgated through the garrison, and addressed especially to Dillon's regiment, affirmed that the culprits "had enlisted freely into the King's service, and had been treated with the consideration extended to British soldiers."

The proceedings of the court-martial were forwarded to the Commander-in-chief; and, by return of courier, certain of the prisoners, three in number, were awarded the punishment, specifically, of death. To the others it was assigned to draw lots for a fourth; and the remainder, a numerous list, were offered the choice of death, or the infliction of 500 lashes upon each. The agonising spectacle of the cruel lottery, which was to consign a fourth victim to the tomb, was public, and witnessed by myself, in common with the whole garrison; and the wild despair of the unhappy wretch upon whom the fatal lot descended, was long remembered by us all. The numerous trembling delinquents who had just eluded this most painful risk, all adopted the alternative, and preferred

the scarcely less afflicting visitation of the lash to such an extent, and preparations were forthwith commenced for the solemn catastrophe.

The morning of the execution rose fair and genial; and without the porte of Murcia, in the marsh contiguous to the fortified wall, the troops were drawn up in mournful expectancy of the approaching scene.

The condemned sallied from their last miserable home, in the dungeons adjoining the Main Guard (nearly a mile from the spot selected), and a procession was formed which moved onwards with slow and measured tread, exciting the utmost interest and commiseration in all the spectators, and producing an effect of the most thrilling character. It had, indeed, all the semblance of the funeral pageantry so frequently witnessed on the boards of a theatre, while the fearful reality drew tears and sobs from numberless Spanish females, whom curiosity had attracted to the scene.

First marched a guard of Dillon's regiment in full costume, and with arms loaded, to repel any attempt at rescue. Behind them, soldiers in fatigue uniforms carried the coffins of the condemned, and next marched a double row of monks and friars in the dresses of their various orders, who carried large crucifixes, with the image of the Saviour carved thereon, and shouted in loud, but monotonous accents, as each hand simultaneously elevated the cross

to attract the eyes of the culprits, "Mira * Vmd. el Señor," thrice repeated, after every pause, signifying "Look you to the Lord!" Next walked the unhappy men themselves, and another strong guard, equally in full costume, brought up the rear. In this order the procession marched through a portion of the town; and passing out by the Porte de Murcia, filed to the right, and soon reached the place of execution.

There the men were placed, in a kneeling posture, beside their coffins; and their eyes having been bandaged, the fatal volley was fired, and four immortal beings fell, the victims of as vile a system of regimental despotism as ever sullied the fair fame of the British army.

Two triangles were then erected, all the drummers of the garrison were enlisted in the bloody task, and I am sure I do not exceed the mark when I say that thirty men at least, each received five hundred stripes with the cat-o'nine-tails. My friend, Lieutenant Brumby (who by casual turn of duty commanded the firing party) and Lieutenant Colonel de Rénaud, the Commandant, suffered days of illness from the pain of that cruel spectacle.

Yet another fatal tragedy occurred to disturb the quietude of our existence. I one evening paid a

* This contraction signifies *vuestra merced*, or *usted*, used to express "you."

casual visit to Lieutenant Hewitt, who was on the main-guard; and while sitting in conversation, we suddenly heard a loud shriek, which caused us instantly to start up, and fly to ascertain the cause. No sooner had we cleared the gateway, than we found two soldiers of Dillon's regiment struggling apparently in the agonies of death. The distant view of a fugitive, and a scarcely defined intimation of the cause of his flight, made us run with all the speed of momentary excitement, and we overtook and secured a lance-corporal, who, when captured, was exhausted by a combination of alarm and fast running. We brought him back a prisoner to the guard-house, and then found that a hasty quarrel, arising from low gaming, had induced him to use his knife and stab his two competitors.

In due time both died of their wounds, and the lance-corporal was tried by a court-martial for murder. I was necessarily a witness against him, and upon clear evidence he was sentenced to death.

Hence arose a very unusual mistake on the part of our foreign Commandant, Colonel de Rénaud. Not dreaming of the necessity for superior ratification of the sentence, he signified *his* approval, and the execution was ordered. In this instance, there was no substantial injustice done, for the man had clearly committed a foul murder, and was most righteously

doomed to die. There was simply an important technical informality.

However, the decree of death was registered, and the next question was, who should be its executioner? Considerable difficulty arose to find one, when a Spanish reprobate accepted the office for the reward of twenty dollars; and a gibbet having been erected without the walls, the sentence was carried into effect, and lance-corporal Barrotti, an Italian, was hanged in the presence of the assembled garrison.

The troops were withdrawn, leaving the corpse dangling from the gibbet, and the executioner coolly bestriding it, unsuspecting of danger. A mere corporal's fatigue party had been left, to dig a grave and inter the body, when suddenly the Spanish populace rushed from the town in formidable numbers, surrounded the gibbet, and clamoured loudly for the blood of the executioner. The corporal's party did their best to protect him, but were nearly overpowered, when the Town Major (the present Lieutenant-Colonel Grantham, R.A.) hastily apprized of the tumult, arrived with a competent force to rescue the unhappy wretch, and conduct him to the main-guard.

The utmost resolution, however, on his part was requisite; for the indignant crowd assailed the military, in order to snatch the intended victim from their

grasp; and at the Porte de Murcia, so impetuous was the onslaught, that Grantham was compelled to draw his sword and make a bold effort to charge and overawe the multitude. He finally succeeded in escorting the trembling wretch in safety through the town; and at dawn the following morning, the gates were stealthily unlocked, and the hireling, clutching his twenty dollars, fled away to insure the safety of his life.

While stationed at Carthagena, I made incursions into the circumjacent country, and at length was induced to extend my observations into the somewhat distant precincts of the city of Murcia. The generally flat and uninteresting tract between the port of Carthagena and that rich locality, contains little calculated to arrest the attention of the traveller. Here however, as elsewhere, I had occasion to remark the utter ignorance of Spanish peasants in the matter of comparative distance. Journeying under a burning sun, and over level and dusty plains, I became impatient of apparently interminable space, and referred to every labouring peasant for the length of road dividing me from Murcia. The first told me I was six leagues distant from the city; the next informed me the journey was yet eight leagues; and the last pronounced nine leagues to be the intermediate distance. Meanwhile, between each interro-

gatory, I appeared to have travelled some few miles. At length, after passing a range of desert hills, a noble avenue, graced by lofty trees, notified my proximity to the beautiful city, and a few suburban habitations formed its immediate outskirt. The bridge, arching gracefully over two waterfalls, induced the delighted traveller to listen *arrectis auribus*, and to gaze with admiration at the wide expanse of rich cultivation on either bank of the Segura, there about as wide as the Thames at Richmond.

The city was of irregular construction, containing no one street remarkable for uniformity; but reminding the traveller more of an English provincial town than most others in Spain. Many of the houses were of brick composition, and pointed; and I observed some under the actual process of this unwonted decoration. Ascending to the spire of the cathedral, a fine but sombre structure with an unusually broad ascent to the apex, occasional glimpses revealed the unrivalled verdure and beauty of the surrounding neighbourhood. It seemed to be the very garden of Spain, teeming with bounteous fruitfulness, and was rendered more picturesque by an imposing outline of formidable mountains, beautifully intercepting the gaze.

Travelling from Murcia to Oruhela, a few leagues distant, we tracked the vale of that name, unrivalled

for its loveliness and fragrance. A rude hedge extending for miles, enriched with every native production, the vine clustering with fruit, the pomegranate, the wild rose and the honeysuckle, concealed from our view, except at intervals; the babbling Segura, now shallow and contracted. Contiguous groves of oranges and lemons surcharged the air with their rich perfume; and I unhesitatingly aver, that no Englishman who has travelled the length and breadth of this romantic country, has hesitated to pronounce the vale of Oruhela to be one of its choicest districts.

As the town itself was approached, the odour of oranges and citrons became more fragrant, until the excited delight and enthusiasm of the traveller exhausted itself in disappointment at the plain, uninteresting, and poetless character of the hamlet (it deserved not the name of town) which abruptly disappointed, where the imagination had more than ordinarily exalted expectation.

After passing the chief part of the day and the night at a posada, which maintained the destitute and comfortless character of such establishments in Spain, I retraced my steps, on the following day, with the regiment of Walloon Guards in the service of Spain. This was the best-appointed regiment I had yet seen in this ill-requited service. Sloven-

liness, and the absence of complete equipment, seemed to distinguish all Spanish regiments, and everything in their regard betokened either want of means or a lack of competent supervision. The Walloon Guards, however, appeared to be well appointed; the officers were all mounted upon fine Andalusian horses, and the regiment marched with the firm tread of men well cared for. It was composed of French, Swiss, and Germans, and the officers were mostly French, with a French viscount for their commander. I can only conjecture that, belonging to the body of "Guards," they received a patronising care, for which inferior regiments sighed in vain.

In company with this regiment (with some of whose officers I was acquainted) I retraced my steps to Murcia, under a deluge of rain, which induced me on my arrival, to seek for warmth in the charcoal stoves of the usual miserable posada.

At Murcia I parted company with the Walloon Guards, and thence pursued my solitary course back to Carthagena.

On that occasion I exhibited a lack of intelligence to which I have often recurred with a smile. A few miles from Murcia the road winds through an irregular hilly pass, flanked by abrupt craggy heights, amongst which my boyish recollection of Gil Blas persuaded me that banditti might be supposed to

harbour. It was consequently, as I thought, indispensable to prepare for resistance. To this end I drew my puny sword, and, firmly grasping it, deemed myself equal to repel aggression. I passed, however, unassailed; and subsequent reflection revealed to me all the futility of my cautious valour. Had I in reality been intercepted by robbers, a single *escopata*, pointed from a contiguous eminence, would, in one moment, have disposed of me and of my good Toledo. How necessary it is for years and experience to correct the fancied acumen, and chivalrous precocity of youth!

Connected with Murcia was an incident which had created much merriment at Carthagena. There was, in the latter garrison, a very smart English serjeant, who filled the appointment of "prevost marshal," an office of a military-police character. While he bore the temporary authority of an officer, he was still non-commissioned, and consequently neither associated with the officers, nor with those of his own late condition. This isolation became the more noticeable, because he dressed in the most foppish style, and was altogether a person of very unusual stamp.

With leave of absence, this man visited Murcia, and deemed it fitting to pay his respects to the Spanish Governor; but, in notifying his status, he

transposed his designation, and announced himself as "Marshal Prévost." The Governor was said to have lavished the most polite attentions upon the "Marshal," and to have summoned various Spanish notables to his house to do him honour. Moreover, the Governor's appreciation of the high position of his guest was enhanced by the knowledge that the English Commandant of Carthagena, was, at that time, Colonel "Prevost." This humorous assumption of high rank, on the part of such a subordinate, transpired, and the man had to endure tenfold observation and sarcasm.

About that time I received an intimation from Lady Perceval that she had secured for me a commission in the Spanish regiment of Doyle, principally officered by Irishmen, and then commanded by one. My report of the progress I was making in the Spanish language, had induced my zealous friend to seek out what she deemed a useful field for my rising proficiency. I was referred to functionaries at Cadiz for the requisite initiation (should I desire it), and was admonished to exert my best abilities in, what she termed, "a fruitful field for distinction."

At that period the inflated language of Spanish despatches, and the fervid diction of Spanish proclamations and addresses, misled the English nation into the belief, that they recorded and excited the

most valorous deeds; whereas, with rare exceptions, the short-comings of the Spanish troops rendered them a by-word to the British, in their country. I, who believe that all men, when well disciplined, and properly sustained, and led, are nearly equal in bravery, can find every excuse for those neglected troops. Arms had indeed been furnished by the English nation; but what did they avail in the hands of men destitute, for the most part, of clothing, nutriment, or pay? Without adequate sustenance to uphold their physical energies, or pay to reward their toil and dangers, or hope of any kind to support their minds, how could Spanish soldiers be expected to vie with their more favoured allies?

If, as often happened, the British were in arrear of pay, or subject to keen privations, they bore up against such casualties manfully; because they knew that, while such a condition was from circumstances inevitable, it was the exception, not the rule. Not so, however, with the Spaniards; destitution was with them a hopeless rule, and they had no incentive to enthusiasm, or spirit for endurance.

I had little doubt of obtaining the same licence from the Board of Ordnance, which had been so largely conceded to others (especially for the Portuguese service); but I had looked with pity upon most Spanish troops, and felt no desire to join their

ranks. With many, authorised to retain their British pay (not otherwise), such a service seemed to promise a field for practical observation, and a ready means for acquiring the Castilian language. I, however, could not convince myself, that the standard of Spain was an emblem of victory ; and I felt so great a repugnance to embrace this proposition, that I relinquished it without even a passing inquiry at Cadiz. While the infantry was in its general composition dwarfish, and bore the most slovenly and supine appearance, the cavalry was badly appointed, and the only service calculated to kindle enthusiasm or entail reward, was that of the Guerillas, who did oft-times capture convoys, and otherwise secure occasional booty.

In Carthagena we witnessed all the unmeaning mirth and absurdity that characterise the Carnival. But for the apparently predetermined zeal in the cause of fun and frolic, there was nothing to relieve the senseless buffoonery of the scene. The wretched practical jokes perpetrated in the open streets ; the incomprehensible roars of laughter which their awkward execution extorted ; the peppering with sand ; the quiet, but sly dislodgment of the hat ; the cloud of flour, puffed into the face of an unconscious approacher, at a given signal, by the breath of a fellow who applied his mouth to the old bent barrel of

a musket, artistically disposed to peep round corners, and similar puerilities; dignified the pleasures of the crowd day after day.

Towards night the public masquerade balls at the theatre, the pit of which was boarded over to promote dancing, would cause the concentration of all who could possibly quit their homes. There you might in reality witness an unceremonious intermixture. All persons of all ranks stood up in the same set, their masks concealing their features; noble and plebeian forms and hands were intertwining in the mazy evolutions of the dance, without anything whatever arising to disturb the conventional harmony.

Here again, however, the childish development of Spanish jocoseness became still more apparent. The vulgar but quaint sentences emanating from the galleries of our theatres, and so heartily enunciated by "flash" spirits, seem gigantic efforts of the imagination, when contrasted with the everlasting Spanish masquerade query "No me conoces?" (Do you not know me?) The mask being on, and the voice assumed, the question involved a trifling perplexity, but how much wit and mental effort—is manifest. It was the only question ever asked upon these mirthful occasions, and the only sally in which the fair masqueraders ever indulged. Still the throng, the music, the dance, and a spice of passing

flirtation tended to amuse and to exhilarate, and I should blush to be too closely questioned as to the number of successive nights that saw me at those masquerades.

At this station I embarked in an escapade which caused excessive amusement both to the garrison and to the inhabitants. There was amongst the very few medical officers on that station a young surgeon on the staff, who at that period was entitled "a hospital mate." He was of diminutive stature, and deformed; but he was joyous and good-tempered enough, with, however, a quick apprehension of any personal indignity. He knew his physical defects, and professed a determination to resent any reflection upon them. He had purchased pistols, and incessantly vaunted his determination to use them in case of insult. By the habitual reiteration of prospective hostility, he unreflectingly assumed a tone of gasconade, which caused infinite mirth to his familiar friends. It was his custom to descend from the Murralla on which he resided, into the town every evening, at a time when sunset was succeeded by sudden darkness; and we had all remarked his returning habit of whistling loudly, and of rattling his sword by his side. His peculiarities in these respects suggested to Mr. Grindlay, of Dillon's regiment, and

myself, the humorous project to way-lay and to rob him.

We consequently assumed clever disguises, of a Spanish cut-throat character; but before proceeding to our lair on the Muralla, we determined to prowl about the quarters of two friends (Medlicott of the 67th regiment, and Bate, of Dillon's regiment), whom we knew to be dressing at that moment for a tertulia, and thus to test the completeness of our transformation. We were infinitely amused at their exclamations at our suspicious appearance, and at their careful double-locking of their doors in the corridor of the Marine College.

Having thus certified our perfect metamorphosis, we sallied forth to await the coming of our deformed doctor. The well-known whistle and the clanging of the sword notified his approach, when out we sprang, and seizing the petrified medico, heard with infinite zest his imprecations and deprecations in bad Castilian, and we proceeded to divest him of his sword, cocked-hat, and surtout, with which we decamped.

With great celerity we changed our attire, and then, in our wonted costume, dropped in as casual visitors to our despoiled friend. He lived with the late Assistant Commissary, General Trenor, and no sooner had we entered his apartment, than a wild

wail over his recent bereavement became to us so irresistibly comical, that we laughed too immoderately to disguise any longer the *dramatis personæ* of the robbery.

He bore the rude joke with surpassing good humour, and it became the theme of universal conversation; but all parties united in declaring it to have been too grave a practical trick. The poor little fellow, notwithstanding his personal deformity, was appointed assistant surgeon of a regiment of dragoon guards; but alas! his subsequent career became obscured by gaming propensities, which consigned him, equally with all such others, to ruin.

CHAP. V.

INTERNAL DISUNION OF A FOREIGN REGIMENT.—FOREIGN REGIMENTS GENERALLY.—AN ESCAPE FROM EXPLOSION.—TERTULIAS AND A MATRIMONIAL INCIDENT.—THE RE-DELIVERY OF THE FORTS.—SEPARATION, AND ITS REFLECTIONS.—A VOYAGE.—A LADY AND HER DIFFICULTIES.—ARRIVAL AT TARRAGONA.

FOR many months at Carthagenæ I was a member of the mess of Dillon's regiment, and in the course of time had ample occasion to observe the strange incongruity of taste and sentiments amongst these foreign officers. The majority were French, but there were also Germans, Italians, Sicilians, and even Corsicans, with some few English subalterns. Disunion was the order of the day; and to correct that besetting infirmity, an Englishman, Lieutenant-Colonel Watson, had been appointed to the command. Unhappily, he proved himself to be quite unfitted for his post, and was soon deposed by a rancorous combination amongst the foreign officers, whereby his defects were discovered and exposed. He retired, and the regiment was left in the hands of Lieutenant-Colonel de Renaud.

The foreign regiments in the service of Great

Britain at that period were numerous. There were the several battalions of the King's German Legion, the Brunswick Oels, De Watteville's, De Rolle's, Meuron's, and Dillon's regiments, the Chasseurs Britanniques, the Calabrese Free Corps, the Corsican Rangers, the Italian Levy, the Sicilian regiments of foot, the Greek light infantry, the Bourbon regiment, Foreign Veteran Battalion, and three other corps. Some of these regiments did good service, and were both esteemed and trusted. The gallant character of the German Legion was unsurpassed in the British army. Dillon's regiment, I fear, was little appreciated.

When I first met Dillon's regiment, a Frenchman, Lieutenant Normanville, was under suspension from rank and pay for six months, for having assailed, with a chair, Captain le Vaillant, also a Frenchman. An English subaltern was under close arrest for having, with an excess of energy, protested against the use of the *bâton* upon the soldiers of the company of Captain Count Grimaldi, also a Frenchman, and a connection of the deposed Bourbons. That gentleman, by the way, was always cynically detracting from British pretensions, although he did not scruple to subsist upon British pay.

Lieutenant-Colonel de Rénaud, on assuming the command of the garrison, surrendered the command

of the regiment to the next in seniority, Captain le Vaillant, and incessant jarring between the two was the consequence. No field day or inspection passed off without an open display of acrimony. The old Colonel would fume intensely at the *gaucherie*, with which he charged Le Vaillant, and would inform the first spectator of his acquaintance (upon an occasion I was the one addressed), that under his direction the regiment had been "*magnifique*," but that Monsieur le Vaillant had quite impaired its discipline. Le Vaillant would retort angrily, and the colloquy would at length prove highly farcical. Still the regiment exhibited a fine external appearance, and in abler hands would have done honour to the service. On its removal to Gibraltar, in 1814, it was the first foreign corps reduced,—a proof of the little estimation in which it was held.

While at Carthagena I conceive my life to have been more seriously jeopardised than in any after period of my hazardous career. I was inspecting the immense powder magazine of Fort Galeras, which then contained 3000 barrels of powder, attended by a bombardier, who carried an ordinary magazine lantern. His foot accidentally became entangled in one of the hair-cloths, and he fell with his whole length upon the floor. The lantern bounded forward, was opened by the shock, and the lighted candle

falling out, rolled some distance along the floor of the magazine, which was then strewn with grains of gunpowder. My alarm and trepidation may be imagined; but the bombardier, with admirable presence of mind, jumped up, and carefully lifting the burning candle, safely deposited it again in the lantern, saying, coolly, "There, sir, never mind, now it's all right." I trembled nervously throughout the day, and could with difficulty recover my composure; and I have ever since considered myself to have had a very narrow escape from an appalling death; as, also, had the town and neighbourhood from total annihilation.

Throughout our residence at Carthagena we were admitted to all the distinguished tertulias of the town. The governor, Don Juan Ruis, kept open house for the reception of company twice a week; but neither at his house nor elsewhere, during many months, did I ever, upon one single occasion, see other refreshment than iced water. The poverty, at that epoch, of the upper classes in Spain was extreme. Grandees, with their embroidered habiliments and crosses, were seen making their frugal purchases, in the market, of the cheapest provisions, and they were constantly to be met holding slender baskets containing a little coarse bread, to be seasoned with some very inexpensive fruit or fish. Indeed, with

their outward assumption of Castilian pride was combined as much real destitution as might well bespeak the pity of the meanest artizan.

When, on the observance of any national fête, such as the king's birthday, the British gave an evening entertainment, and, conformably with our national custom, refreshments abounded, the free use made of them by Spanish visitors provoked universal strictures.

The belle of every Carthaginian tertulia was a young lady of distinguished Castilian family named Asarte. She was under twenty years of age, exceedingly pretty, exhibited the most winning manners, and fascinated every body by the sweetness of her general style and deportment. The wide-spread poverty, at that period, of her order, attached equally to her family, and doubtless influenced her to listen complacently to the addresses of Major V——, of the Regiment de Watteville, a Frenchman, who had attained to at least fifty years. His offer of marriage had been accepted, when the sudden embarkation for Cadiz of the companies detached to Carthagena, arrested the consummation of his project.

At parting, however, it was agreed that the major, on his arrival at Cadiz, should make all practicable arrangements for the removal, under proper female

protection, of Señorita Asarte, and that there she should become his wife.

True to his promise, the major despatched to the town major at Carthagená all the requisite instructions, and transmitted, for the requirements of two gentlewomen, the munificent sum of twenty dollars, or *five pounds* sterling. Had the means of transport been as abundant as they were scarce, — nay, hardly procurable — the amount transmitted to enable two ladies of distinguished birth to travel 300 miles at least, was so perfectly disproportioned to the object in view, that not the slightest attempt appeared to have been made to move one step to accomplish it.

The “affair” transpired, and became the subject of intense ridicule. However, the Regiment de Watteville sailed from Cadiz to Canada; and Major V—— suffered the loss of his intended wife, together with the princely remittance despatched for her accommodation. The Señorita continued at Carthagená to be the ornament of the tertulias; and judging by her never-failing sprightliness and good humour, seemed to suffer but little disquietude from the wreck of her matrimonial prospects.

At length, in February 1814 (after the Duke’s brilliant series of victories), when orders arrived to dismantle the forts, or rather to divest them of all English *matériel*, with a view to deliver them up to

the Spanish authorities, the commanding officer of artillery was under arrest, and on trial by a general court-martial. A midnight freak, while in company with the captain of the "Ganymede" frigate, had involved him in a serious embroilment with the Spanish guard at the Puerta Mariña, and a grave report having been transmitted to head-quarters, the Duke of Wellington had ordered a searching inquiry into his conduct. He was consequently stripped, *pro tempore*, of all authority. The next in command was judge advocate upon that especial occasion, and the yielding up of the forts was confided to me by this train of circumstances. I consequently superintended the disarmament of the forts, and so soon as that duty had been accomplished, I waited, by direction of the commandant of the garrison, upon Don Juan Ruis, the governor, to notify that their final surrender merely awaited his pleasure.

On that occasion I was shown into a saloon, crowded with visitors, seated, and in conversation with his Excellency, who proved to be the only layman amongst them. All the rest were ecclesiastics, and dressed in sacerdotal costume.

At that epoch the influence of the priesthood was all-pervading. It confronted you at every turn; and as I had so often seen and deplored that fatal subserviency in the Spanish people, I noted this last

indication of an absorbing domination as a remarkable fact.

While I was engaged in the dismantling of Fort St. Julien, and our munitions were thence consigned to the beach for embarkation, a well-dressed Spanish *bourgeois* stealthily advanced, and in a suppressed tone asked me if I could sell him a few barrels of powder; at the same time whispering a sum per barrel. I was indignant at the fellow's rascality, but, feigning to assent, I beckoned to Serjeant Shand, who headed the fatigue party, and told him I should like to expel this scoundrel from the fort *vi et armis*. Shand conceived at once the acceptability to the men of such gentle compulsion, and the word to strike work having been given, and the purport of the pause communicated, the forthcoming ceremony was much relished.

Meanwhile, there stood my honest friend, hoping to realise a good day's work; when, at my bidding, he was roughly extruded to the edge of the steep descent, and unceremoniously kicked half way down it, by a set of Herculean fellows, whose kicks and laughter observed correct concord. It was a well-deserved castigation, and I gave the gunners some wine for their zeal on the occasion. For the information of those unacquainted with the "land of the myrtle, the olive, and vine," I confess that the

drain upon my pocket was inconsiderable, seeing that one penny per bottle would procure wine, at once potent and palatable.

A proposition similar to that above related was made to Assistant Commissary-General Melville, in his own office at Carthage, for beef or pork in cask, instead of powder in barrel. Poor Melville, who was then much out of health, essayed to hurl the fellow down stairs, but an accelerated descent on his part saved him the trouble. These temptations may serve to illustrate the universality of chicanery, uninfluenced by clime or complexion.

The time had now arrived when I was to bid adieu to Carthage, where I had enjoyed many months of pleasure and repose; had formed friendships which were to prove enduring, and had, under the tuition of a Spanish priest, acquired a respectable knowledge of the Castilian tongue.

I had threaded all the devious passes of the surrounding mountains, — wild, barren, and shivered into varied fragmental shapes. I also had paid my *devoirs* to “La Funcion de la Mar,” an annual fair held in a wild locality on the sea coast, distant even from any village, but which, notwithstanding, attracted vast crowds from wide-spread towns and hamlets, and differed but little from an ordinary English fair. The chief amusement (amidst the

stalls displaying toys, and gingerbread, and the usual harlequinades badly executed,) consisted in the playful of both sexes seizing the opportunity, unobserved, to grate the back or shoulders of others with penny rattles; bounding away with loud laughter when they conceived a momentary surprise had been effected. But for the difference of language and costume, the Englishman might persuade himself he was actually at an inferior provincial fair. All the company, however, was arrayed in gay attire.

Moreover, my friend Lieutenant Brumby and myself had shared an *étage*, or flat, of one of the neglected residences on the Muralla, where we literally kept open house for all the gun-room officers of the men-of-war—especially the Ganymede frigate and Merope brig—which from time to time entered the port. It proved, in the course of time, to be an expensive hospitality, but we failed not to enjoy the genuine welcome on board their ships, which was so distinguishing a feature in the sailors of that epoch, and has most probably never forsaken a class of men so genuine and sincere.

My increased allowances as paymaster had kept me supplied with adequate funds, and the further allowance by Government of 150 dollars for the purchase of a horse, had enabled me to possess myself of one of the true Andalusian stamp.

The race of horses in Spain is decidedly good. Distinguished by blood, bone, and symmetry, they are quite equal to English half-breds at least. Mine was groomed by a tall French cavalry man, a prisoner of war, who for the rations it was my privilege to draw, rejoiced in a sumptuous change from the miserable portion doled out by the impoverished Spaniards. He was a good groom, and a gentle and grateful creature. Poor fellow ! he mourned, with my departure, the loss, in his circumstances, of a splendid *menage*, and had to resume a condition which, I hope, for the sake of humanity, those in the same predicament in England did not realise.

No human position is designed to be altogether cloudless, and hence my serenity in this garrison had been disturbed by the irritable temper of my commanding officer, whom I had unwittingly offended. A change from the most friendly to the most hostile demeanour, and many practical annoyances tended to mar my tranquillity. Originally I was the party wronged, but I look back with condemnation and regret at the contumacious spirit which my fancied injuries excited, and which entailed upon me a reproof from head-quarters.

On leaving the garrison, however, the hand of peace was extended to me, and in a letter, voluntarily written, my services were flatteringly eulo-

gised. Consequently I perceived that if that gentleman (who is now an old colonel) had been somewhat infirm of temper, he yet possessed the generosity to forgive, and to render justice to an enemy.

The "Lord Wellington," armed transport, had been despatched from Tarragona to receive and convey the ordnance, and stores to that port from Carthagen, and being now freighted, and ready to sail, I had to support the leave-taking from many an esteemed friend.

After having become case-hardened against the world, we look back with something akin to envious wonder at the gushes of tender feeling which an unusual separation would erst evoke. I shed tears at parting with one friend, and poignantly regretted a separation from others. I am, even now, frequently visited, after the lapse of thirty-eight years, by friends first known at Carthagen, amongst whom is Lieutenant-Colonel Grantham, R.A., who was then a subaltern, but married. So many were the hospitable attentions which I received from that gentleman, and so judicious was the advice he always gave me when in conflict with the commanding officer, that it has been a delight to me to make all the return in my power for bygone kindness.

However, I sailed and saw the landmarks of that interesting port fade from my sight, most likely for

ever; and I trod the deck of the "Lord Wellington" musing upon forthcoming scenes.

On this short voyage of five days I was accompanied by Madame de Choiseul, to whom I had been introduced at Carthagera by the Grantham family. She was a young and interesting woman, married to Captain Choiseul of the 27th regiment (son of the *émigré* duke of that name) who at that time was attached to the Calabrese Free Corps, one of those foreign levies already chronicled, which the necessities and gold of England had enrolled under her capacious banner.

We two were the only passengers, and were liberally entertained by the captain of the "Lord Wellington," whom we urged in vain to accept remuneration for his hospitality. He was one of those hearty British spirits whose mind was imbued with a generous sympathy for the manifold privations of a restless service, and he declared to me that it was his pride never to have received payment from any one whom the casualties of duty had cast under his protection.

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the trials and difficulties which at that epoch assailed the ladies of officers on active foreign service. In the instance of Madame de Choiseul, she had been left by her husband in Sicily while he accompanied the expedition

against the French troops in Catalonia; and after the expulsion of the enemy from Tarragona, and its undisputed occupation by the British, an opportunity seemed to present itself for reunion with scattered families. Many a divided household sighed in vain to accomplish this object. They were foiled by the want of intercourse between divided ports, little accustomed to aught but a very circumscribed commerce. Madame de Choiseul, therefore, could find no vessel bound from any Sicilian harbour to the eastern coast of Spain, and a speculative voyage to Gibraltar was her only resource. At Gibraltar she happily found a vessel bound to Carthagena, and thence she hoped, but hardly expected, to meet with a further means of transit to Tarragona. The embarkation of the ordnance stores at Carthagena was proceeding, when this lady arrived to glean the joyful tidings of their destination.

Madame de Choiseul (an Englishwoman, by the way,) was, as I have said, the only passenger besides myself, and she being young and of gentle manners, I was assiduous in my respectful attentions to her. The "Lord Wellington" (armed as she was) touched at Alicant, to take charge of a small convoy to Tarragona. The opportunity was thus afforded me to land and inspect this unpretending town.

It was, indeed, an unshapen mass of buildings,

rudely disposed, without adornment of any kind, and destitute of a single good street. The old castle claimed some honour from its apparent antiquity; and the singular zig-zag wall, the out-mark of its ascent, proved the only noticeable object to a casual visitant. While wandering, *tout distrait*, through the streets of Alicant, I suddenly met some of the officers of the "Merope," brig of war,—my quondam friends at Carthagena; and no press-gang ever seized upon an errant wanderer with more *empressement* than I was attacked by these good fellows, who hurried me into their boat, carried me, *nolens volens*, to their vessel, and ultimately seated me at their truly festive board. I had great difficulty in persuading them to give me a boat, even at the eleventh hour, to reach the "Lord Wellington," so hospitably anxious were they to take me, by the circuitous route of Valencia, to Tarragona.

Here let me remark that in my varied experience, how often have I found young men yielding to every friendly entreaty to disregard direct objects, and unresistingly to be diverted from them by any casual entreaty, professing to attain, by a bye path (trodden in quest of pleasure), the object which was plainly attainable without risk. I hesitate not to say that this is a prevailing snare, in which many an incautious youth has been entrapped to his ruin. I suc-

cessfully resisted the dangerous entreaties of excited friends, and again trod the quarter-deck of the "Lord Wellington."

Our voyage was soon accomplished. The flat coast immediately contiguous to the devoted city presented an unfavourable contrast with the picturesque, or lofty outlines of most Spanish ports, and the first glimpse was unfavourable.

I landed, taking my fair charge under my arm, and escorted her, guided by frequent inquiries, to the residence of some of her lady friends, but alas! not to her husband. He, little dreaming of the happiness awaiting him, was still distant and on duty. The dear woman's grief and disappointment were too apparent; however, she thanked me in earnest terms, and we parted.

May I, without being deemed presumptuous, declare the truth? This parting distressed me. For some days the image of that sweet woman haunted me. I had dared to admire her, as modestly, indeed, as hopelessly, but still, my youthful heart was touched by the beauty and fascinations of a young Englishwoman, and I sighed at her departure, and (when alone) audibly, over my deprivation.

CHAP. VI.

TARRAGONA — ITS DILAPIDATION. — TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF FERDINAND VII. — ANOTHER ROYAL PERSONAGE. — SIR SIDNEY SMITH — HIS OPPORTUNE ARRIVAL TO AVERT DEATH. — TARRAGONA EVACUATED. — SPANISH QUALITIES. — ARRIVAL AT GENOA.

TARRAGONA was almost a heap of ruins. The bombardment had effected much towards its dilapidation, but the wanton destruction of the French, prior to its evacuation, more.

The inner basin was densely crowded with shipping, chiefly laden with British stores. The Mariña or landing place passed, an intermediate tract, desolate, and infested with beggars, led to the fortified town. The Calle Mayor, or Main Street, was blocked up by the ruin of houses; and a huge mound, formed by the débris of prostrate buildings, intercepted the progress of vehicles, and had to be climbed over by pedestrians.

A close inspection of the town disclosed a general wreck of habitations; and the simple question of arrivers was, "Where shall the weary rest?" I had the doubtful good fortune to procure a quarter furnished with the absolute necessities for sleeping, but

had to bound over a pool of mire ere I could attain to the threshold of my residence. Mere shells of houses answered the description of "billets" to most officers, and they found themselves as denuded of all domestic appliances as though they were in the naked bivouac.

The fine cathedral, on an elevated site, and accessible by a broad and imposing flight of stone steps, appeared to have escaped the general wreck, but was said to have been divested of every costly appurtenance. The ramparts generally were battered and crumbling, but were still well mounted with cannon, and a stricter vigilance was enjoined to compensate for their damaged condition.

As the French still occupied isolated fortresses in Catalonia (exclusive of Barcelona), and as sallies on their part were hourly expected, an active vigilance was enjoined. We were even one evening startled by the sudden roar of cannon, which caused a general muster of the troops, and the prompt occupation of the ramparts. It was found, however, to proceed from a horde of banditti, which had descended from their mountain fastnesses, armed to the teeth, and furnished with light pieces of artillery, at that moment used to repel a serious onslaught.

Just prior to our destined departure from Tarragona the political affairs of Europe had constrained

the release of Ferdinand the Seventh, who was at that time regarded as the symbol of Spanish constitutionalism. The patriotic songs of that period connected his name with the religion, laws, and enfranchisement of the kingdom. Millions of voices swelled the note of praise to his reputed virtues, and the excited nation beheld in him the promise of predestined liberty. When his release from the long captivity of Valançay became known, and his actual approach was notified, expectation ripened into wild enthusiasm, till at length the realisation of his presence on the soil of Spain begat a joy, so genuine and universal, that his actual approximation to the Catalonian capital awakened all the chivalry of the Spanish character.

A fine day in the spring of 1814 witnessed all the preparations to welcome, with befitting solemnity, the *entrée* of the august monarch. The day was serene, and the multitudes thronging the city innumerable. As every niche and corner was occupied, I resolved to mount my horse, and, threading my way through a dense multitude, and passing with difficulty the numerous body of troops marshalled for the occasion, I burst from the restraints of the city, and betook myself to the external road, which indicated, by exhaustless throngs of people, the route of the advancing *cortège*. I journeyed on through

tumultuous assemblages until something like open space afforded me time for deliberate choice. Determining still to advance, and to meet the royal retinue, I pushed on, until a halt of carriages, the descent of their occupants, and their transfer to horses richly caparisoned, made me fully aware of the royal presence.

A splendid cavalcade was formed, and, for the first time, I beheld the idolised Fernando Septimo. He was accompanied by his brother Don Carlos, by the celebrated General Castaños, and by a brilliant staff. I was the only officer from the city who had ventured thus far, and my uniform procured for me the desired courtesy. I fell in amongst the king's numerous suite, and soon engaged in conversation with an aide-de-camp, and by this happy adventure I found myself most eligibly placed.

The interval between my egress and return had been so zealously occupied by the countless throngs that issued from all the circumjacent country, and indeed from wide-spread districts, that at length every bank, hedge, and tree, had been invaded, and the whole scene became one of marvellous activity and excitement. The shouts that rent the air, the wild ecstasies of rapture and delight exhibited by the exuberantly loyal subjects of Spain, denoted the intensity of expectation and devotion that agitated

each Spaniard's heart. On we travelled, amidst a revelry of patriotic joy that knew no bounds. The king — a stout, dark, coarse-featured man, with a countenance devoid of intellectuality — seemed rather amused than impressed, and he laughed most unsparingly at some of the many extravagant gesticulations that carried his votaries beyond the verge of decorum.

The city gates were reached. The frowning ramparts were lined with spectators; the guns thundered their reverberating welcome; military bands (indistinctly heard amid the roar of cannonry and the exulting shouts from human throats) struck up the national anthem; and, in the midst of this pageantry, and thunder, and vociferous exultation, the governor humbly advanced, and on his knees presented the keys of the city to his Majesty, only to be assured they were in excellent keeping, and to witness their instant restitution.

The gates passed, good Heavens, what a sight was there developed. The streets, the windows and balconies, the roofs and chimneys, every spot accessible to human footing, bore evidence of the intense enthusiasm. Banners, fans, handkerchiefs waved simultaneously; while the troops (principally the Italian levy, of British organisation) presented arms; and thus, amid the extreme of external demonstra-

tion that a nation's love could offer, did this unworthy monarch receive the homage of his people.

It is from no desire to exalt my own above the opportunities of others to observe this memorable scene, but simply as a fact (arising from a casual resolution to emerge from the city in the morning) that I record my own means of witnessing the king's demeanour. It both surprised and disgusted me, and has frequently since been the subject of my reflections. Instead of bending gracefully beneath the overflowing compliments of his subjects, or of bowing with kingly dignity to their loyal demonstrations of attachment, he frequently nodded from side to side, and knowingly winked his eye. Since history has recorded his subsequent baseness and ingratitude, his violation of all constitutional law, his proscriptions, and assassinations, I have recurred to that vulgar wink of the eye at Tarragona, as the passing reflection of a vicious mind, thereafter frightfully to cheat the expectations of a nation. He repaired to the governor's house, where the kissing of hands was so general and uncereemonious as to cease to be a distinction. Thence he visited the Mariña, from which he could survey the mole and bay, and in three hours' time set off for Reus.

Within a fortnight of the king's departure, a scene

was enacted which assumed the form of a burlesque upon royalty. One forenoon the quiet of the garrison was disturbed by a thundering explosion from a ship of war in the roads. All eyes were outstretched to account for this unusual demonstration, when the "Hibernia," of 110 guns, bearing the flag of Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, was found to have anchored in the roads, and was thus either exhausting its joy at the riddance, or intending to congratulate the shore on the acquisition of an aged Spanish princess, an aunt of King Ferdinand. With the utmost celerity troops were marched down to the Mariña to form a guard of honour, which extended in double file to the city, while those stupefied by this fearful *tapage* hastened to witness the upshot.

I had scarcely reached the verge of the Mariña ere the gig of Sir Sidney Smith rapidly approached the landing-place, and on being duly brought up, out stepped an aged lady, in very rusty black attire, leaning upon the arm of the gallant admiral. On her landing he pulled off his hat in courteous style, and consigned her to the attentions of a Spanish lieutenant-colonel in waiting, who, wearing simply a frock coat, and bearing in his hand a plain walking-stick, doffed his hat, and extending his arm, led her Highness off, on foot, to receive the presentation of arms of the double file of troops that lined her pas-

sage. Poor old soul! thus she toddled to the city, incommoded by all the honours extended to her, while the spectators laughed, not at the poor old woman, but at the absurd etiquette, combined with regal destitution, which marked the entrance to a city of Spain of a princess of the blood royal.

Within a few days of this regal reception, Sir Sidney Smith again appeared before the wondering eyes of strangers. Two soldiers of the Italian Levy had been convicted of intercepting and plundering a commissariat convoy, and had been adjudged to suffer death for that offence. Already were the troops paraded on a waste spot, on the left of the interstice between the Mariña and the city, and there, by mere accident, also was I, and a friend now residing in Cheshire. A ceremony peculiar, I presume, to Italian military procedure was observed. The culprits stood awaiting death; but first, their hair, facings, and accoutrements were consigned to a fire, lighted for the occasion, and burnt before their assembled comrades. Next came the preliminaries of the last exaction; and while we momentarily awaited the fatal fusillade, up rode, quite unexpectedly, Sir Sidney Smith, whose high rank and naval exploits caused a pause to ensue, and he received all honours from the troops. He conferred for a few minutes with Count de la Tour, the

general commanding, and at the intercession of the gallant admiral the fate of the culprits was temporarily suspended. It was afterwards understood that, by this unlooked for casualty, their lives had been spared.

At Tarragona I became familiar with the gambling characteristic of a large class of Spaniards. One of those establishments, aptly termed "hells," was daily, but more especially nightly, thronged with gamblers, whose devotion to this most absorbing vice, exhibited a pitiable prostration of intellect. Day after day, for successive weeks, have I observed the same individuals (unconnected with the bank) seated at that accursed board, from its earliest opening in the forenoon, to the hour of cessation at midnight. Having watched these votaries to play with some curiosity, I observed that about one o'clock they would roll up their cash, and run to partake of a hasty meal, returning with the utmost despatch, to devote themselves, with untiring zest, to this ignoble passion. Gaming seemed to be the sole aim of their existence. The game played was Monté; and at times very large sums were staked.

My quondam friend, the deformed medico, had been almost reduced to beggary by this infatuation, when I arrived at Tarragona. Having met him accidentally, he sorrowfully detailed to me (then flush of

cash) the destitute condition of that part of the army, arising from the long arrears of pay withheld — a fact beyond dispute both there and elsewhere, owing to the scarcity of specie. He pleaded the impossibility of getting bills upon England cashed, and carefully concealing the ruin resulting from his sad propensity, importuned me, and successfully, to lend him one hundred dollars, which I handed to him chiefly in doubloons.

I had scarcely parted from him, with an undertaking to meet him at dinner, than I was cautioned by our mutual friend Trenor, against acceding to any such possible request; and then I learned the full extent of the medico's embarrassment, which seemed to threaten the certain sacrifice of my loan to him. However, that night, in his company, I paid my first visit to that pandemonium. Fortune smiled upon the medico, and he returned home the winner of 400 dollars, which, with my hundred, he coolly deposited in a box.

A little tact became necessary on my part, delicately as possible, to recover my money; so, proceeding to moralise upon the danger of gaming, I vainly implored him to desist from it. His apology was the sums he had lost, and his desire to regain them. Then, in a tone of nonchalance, I interposed the advice that he should at least prudentially return

my hundred dollars, which would then be secure; and he promptly assenting, I had the rare good fortune to gain repossession of my cash.

I do not believe that my mind has ever elsewhere been more strongly impressed than at Tarragona with the enormous outlay of money by the British, in order to sustain the Peninsular war. The immense amount of shipping, containing stores of every description, lying inactive in that port, paid at a rate varying from 20s. to 25s. per ton per month. The great value of the vast accumulation of stores landed, assorted, and in charge of a numerous staff of officers; the guns mounted on the ramparts; the arms and clothing lavished upon certain Spanish troops, hourly recognisable by the British mark; the army at Esplugas, to restrain the movements of Suchet from Barcelona; three battalions of the Italian Levy in the city—cutting the most sorry figure, and yet officered, armed, clothed, and paid upon the scale of the British army; the regiment of Dillon, part of the 67th and 44th regiments, and various other detachments, together with an imposing force of artillery in the city, and of cavalry in the vicinity, — exhibited so immense an expenditure upon a comparatively inglorious province (for the British arms had been signally unsuccessful on the eastern coast), that I used to marvel at the profusion, and wonder how the Spanish

nation ever could make amends for the sacrifices of Great Britain to effect its independence. Well might the Spaniards deem our wealth inexhaustible, for we did indeed waste our blood and treasure in their cause. This was a mere fraction of the cost, but it filled my mind with astonishment.

A remarkable feature was observable in the purveyors to the market of Tarragona. The female peasants all appeared in a neat and picturesque costume, common to that provincial class. It consisted of a pretty uniform head-dress, with a boddice of black velvet, ornamented with fringe and tassels, together with a *jupe* of the same material, flounced and braided. Neat stockings, with shoes and sandals, completed their attire. The men wore, as elsewhere in Spain, jackets and breeches of dark velveteen, set off with rows of silver or brass buttons of peculiar mould, relieved by pink sashes, and the whole surmounted by broad hats.

Eastward of Tarragona the country, well cultivated, displayed gentle swells, with a soil so chalky that, when a brisk wind prevailed, the traveller soon wore the appearance of an English miller. Westward of the city, the landscape more resembled that of England than was noticeable in most other parts of Spain. Issuing from the western gate, on the right, a vast aqueduct of course unfinished (a common

occurrence with designs originally intended for the general good) stood a monument either of fickleness or poverty; and descending from the fortifications, the traveller beheld fields of verdant pasturage supporting sleek cattle, which appeared to browse and thrive.

Journeying amongst hedge-divided fields, a broad causeway led to the town of Reus, in itself a curiosity. Covering a very extended space, it contained nothing worthy to be designated a street. Anything more ungainly than the buildings can scarcely be imagined. They rather resembled stables than trading habitations. Reus, however, contained a large *posada*, whereat our party ordered green peas; but when dinner was served we found, to our mortification, that they had been stewed with fish. Such was Reus, the merely nominal capital of Catalonia.

I was now about to quit Spain, but I cannot take leave of that romantic land without bearing my willing testimony to the good qualities of its inhabitants. Immeasurably behind the rest of Europe in the various arts, and inflated with the reminiscence of their former grandeur, they vainly imagined themselves to be a people of superlative political pretensions. Still they were a chivalrous nation. Reliance might always assuredly be placed in the individual honour and sound feeling of most Spaniards. I have

had good reason to remark, that while they so often act impetuously, and without just discrimination as a body, they redeem this national indiscretion by a truthfulness and devotion, as individuals, which must endear them to all who have had cause to test their fidelity.

It will be seen, hereafter, that I had subsequently a large experience of their generous qualities; and I unhesitatingly record my deep sense of their individual magnanimity. Their women are lovely and amiable; spoiled, indeed, by a defective, nay, indolent education; but yet invariably proving innocently seductive by their graces and sweet deportment. Strangers to Spaniards talk, unthinkingly, of their revengeful tempers, and of the free use of their stilettoes under trifling provocation. I can only say I mixed largely amongst all classes, and I never saw aught to justify this too common charge. On the contrary, to me they always appeared mild and forbearing.

Their noble peasantry, remarkable for a robust and muscular appearance, was equally distinguished for endurance and industry. It was by no means an uncommon sight to behold a fine athletic countryman driving an ass (and such a gigantic specimen of that animal) heavily laden, while he himself not only bore

a crushing weight upon his own head, but platted straw also as he strode along. I cannot, however, speak with equal commendation of the industry of the townspeople, who, on the contrary, often exhibited supreme indolence.

The advancing spring of 1814 saw Tarragona evacuated by the British. Part of the troops were despatched to Gibraltar, but the main body repaired to Italy; and a large fleet of transports, under convoy of the "Fame," 74 guns, conveyed a numerous reinforcement to the aid of Lord William Bentinck, who had taken Leghorn, and was about to invest Genoa. On our passage through the Gulf of Lyons, we encountered a storm, common enough in that sea; and, while battling with the elements, we espied a frigate under close-reefed topsails, which proved to be the "Undaunted," Captain Usher, conveying the deposed emperor Napoleon to Elba. It is a reminiscence worthy to be treasured up.

Arriving off Genoa, we found Lord William in possession of that city, which had but three days previously capitulated. We consequently sailed into that small, but deep and magnificent bay, excited by the splendid contrast with the dull uninteresting roadstead of Tarragona. The locality is, however, too well known to justify any description from my pen. We found here also the spacious basins crowded with

British shipping, and the city as gay and busy as though unvisited by recent warfare. "Good beer" was ostentatiously placarded at numerous shops and hostelryes, and all denoted a prompt assimilation to the tastes of the new garrison.



CHAP. VII.

TOULON FLEET.—ARRIVAL OF THE KING OF SARDINIA — HIS RECEPTION.—A CROWDED BALL.—AN EXPEDITION TO AMERICA. — AN EXCHANGE AND EMBARKATION. — THE LATE CAPTAIN SPEER — HIS SINGULARITY AND QUALITIES. — THE VOYAGE. — DISPUTES BETWEEN THE CAPTAIN AND CREW. — ARRIVAL AT TENERIFFE. — ALARM, RE-ASSURANCE, AND NATIVE URBANITY. — ARRIVAL AT BERMUDA.

THE late dreaded Toulon fleet, under the command of the then Sir Edward Pellew, ere long quietly anchored in the beautiful, but contracted bay of Genoa, and was opportunely there to give a thundering welcome to his Majesty the King of Sardinia, who, within a few days of our arrival, came to test the sentiments of this portion of his expected subjects, for the annexation of Genoa to Sardinia was then a well-credited rumour.

A host of line-of-battle ships in such unusually close proximity one to the other, and within a stone's throw of this lovely shore, presented necessarily a grand and goodly spectacle; but when in addition their yards were manned, the scene became one of signal interest. The salutation from their "adaman-tine lips" startled the city and the surrounding

country, exhibiting the two-fold moral of a peaceful regal reception, and the desolation which a transition from an amicable to a hostile attitude must inevitably portend.

The *bourgeoisie* of the city deemed it indispensable, as a demonstration of their loyalty, to invite his Majesty and Lord William Bentinck to a grand ball; and on the appointed evening, which chanced to be most sultry, a multitudinous host of persons, far beyond the capacity of the building, crowded to do honour to the King. The pressure was intense, and the atmosphere stifling. The uniforms of British officers became their passports, and scarcely one was absent, thereby adding to the countless throng. In due time his Majesty was paraded, not without great difficulty, through the room, most absurdly attended by a guard of Genoese volunteers, who, with huge cocked hats adorned by stiff feathers, and with arms bristling with fixed bayonets, kept the King a state prisoner, moving clumsily about to the unspeakable discomfort of the company. It was a most ridiculous sight; and when I ventured to express to a Genoese near me, who spoke good French, my surprise at so singular an arrangement, he rebuked me with the remark, which seemed to me as strange an apology: — “*Mais vous sentez bien, monsieur, qu'un roi est toujours respectable*”!

The heat becoming intolerable, and dancing impracticable, numbers flocked away in order to seek coolness and comfort, but with dresses terribly deranged by so ill-regulated a *fête*. This has always struck me to have been the completest compound of loyalty and *gaucherie* that incapable stewards could have devised.

I had not been long at Genoa before orders arrived to prepare an expedition for America. A company of artillery and a detachment of artificers were ordered to be embarked, and two officers of the Field Train Department were also warned for that service. Again it chanced that those selected were unwilling functionaries, and again by a prompt arrangement my volunteer services were allowed in exchange for those of a seceder. Consequently, in the blooming month of May, I left the genial atmosphere of Italy, and embarked on board the "Anne" transport, with Major Pymm's company of artillery, for the distant coast of America. We left the picturesque bay of Genoa with the passing regret which the lovely city's enticements could not fail to awaken.

Here, on board the "Anne" transport, I first became acquainted with the late Capt. Speer, R. A., who was at that period a lieutenant, and with whom I was destined to enjoy a lasting friendship. He

was an Irishman, whose military deportment and handsome features bespoke the favourable bias of most strangers; but he possessed the singular aptitude to embroil himself with prospective friends, ere the seal of real amity could stamp their intercourse. I could cite a good list of his brother officers, towards whom this remarkable propensity had been manifested; nor was I an exception to the rule.

I at first regretted deeply my association with so apparently unfriendly a subject, until, as was common in all other cases, he seemed gradually to relent, and soon became cordial and confiding. From that time forth he was the attached friend, and was the liveliest and best-tempered fellow in the world. He was a vast favourite with the men; for, abhorring punishment, he sought to win their confidence by undeviating kindness and urbanity. His manly spirit urged him forward in any hazardous sport or enterprise, while his bearing before the enemy and disregard of every hardship marked him as the veritable soldier.

In his company, and animated by his example, I subsequently enjoyed many exciting adventures, and retained his friendship to the latest period. Alas! his many endearing qualities were ultimately blighted by mental aberration (the result of a severe fall from a horse), and, when I last saw him, he neither knew

me nor his mother and sister, by whom I was accompanied.

The 21st, 44th, and 62nd regiments were here embarked; and under convoy of the "Iphigenia" and "Euryalus" frigates, aided by other ships of war, proceeded to Gibraltar. There the 29th regiment was added to the armament, and the whole proceeded to a rendezvous off Cape Spartel, on the coast of Africa. Before, however, reaching that destination, I became cognisant of circumstances which greatly distressed my mind. In Carthagea I had formed a close intimacy with Mr. Grindlay of the Regiment de Dillon, who afterwards served for some years in the 43rd Light Infantry. A singular quarrel had arisen between two officers, Lieutenants Bate and Maxwell, of Dillon's regiment, and the details of that misunderstanding had expanded and infected numerous young officers then in quarters at Alicant. Challenges had been given, seconds appointed; but some misadventure seemed to clog at every step a satisfactory termination of the affair. A vast and extended broil was the result. I had been made a party to the transaction by listening to a casual conversation between Messrs. Grindlay and Smith, respectively of Dillon's and the 81st regiment, on the muralla of Carthagea, and that conversation made me an evidence which it afterwards became of the utmost importance to secure.

A court-martial at Gibraltar upon Lieut. Grindlay (one of the seconds, whose arrest and trial arose out of the events of that quarrel) came to a conclusion which my evidence might in all probability have reversed. The court, unhappily for the defendant, had been composed principally of officers of a veteran battalion, and the 4th battalion of the King's German Legion, which had embarked for England, and only waited the termination of those proceedings and a fair wind to sail. The very day before my arrival at Gibraltar the court broke up, the desired wind prevailed, and the elements of the court-martial were dispersed. The fate of the accused rested upon the testimony of one officer, part of whose evidence (essentially false) it was in my power to have refuted, and the well-known rule of extending the benefit of doubt to the prisoner might have saved my friend. CALMS had, however, prevailed off Malaga for some days, and I only arrived at Gibraltar one day too late.

At the sallyport my friend Lieutenant Brumby was on guard, and when I unexpectedly made my appearance there I was assailed with the passionate exclamation—"My God! Chesterton, why did you not come yesterday?" The history was soon disclosed, and a note was despatched to Grindlay, hastily scrawled, "Chesterton has arrived!!!" This

little scrap of paper threw our unfortunate friend into a paroxysm of despair. Such are the incidents of life, and upon such frail casualties does prosperity or adversity sometimes depend ! Lieutenant Grindlay was cashiered. He lost the opportunity of speedy advancement to the rank of captain, and had to toil eight long years as an ensign in the 43rd, ere he could recover the status of which¹ he had been deprived through hasty words hazarded in a senseless quarrel. I have long numbered him amongst my familiar friends ; and the little slip of paper, "Chesterton has arrived," is treasured by him as a memento of that unhappy transaction which marred his military prospects.

A smart gale of wind prevailing, the fleet destined to stretch across the Atlantic with difficulty kept the rendezvous off Cape Spartel. At length the whole stood with outstretched sails towards the Canary Islands ; and on a summer afternoon, the fleet entered the bay of Santa Cruz in the Island of Teneriffe. We scanned with curiosity its bold defences, and gazing upon its protective towers, so terribly effectual in the repulse of Nelson, bethought us of Britain's cherished hero, and contemplated all around us with tenfold interest.

The governor was thrown into a state of deep consternation by the sudden appearance of so for-

midable a force, with troops also crowding the decks of our vessels. He became persuaded that we sought the capture of the island, and a prohibition to land was the first impulse. A suspicion of our object soon gave place to the pacific representations of General Gostling, the military commander, through Mr. Barry, the British consul, and a short hour's colloquy sufficed to dissipate the governor's apprehensions.

The inhabitants of this secluded town flocked in numbers to the Alameda, and a pleasing scene of social excitement broke the torpor of their monotonous existence. The band of one of the British regiments was landed, and the thrill of martial music soon summoned a well-dressed throng to the public walk. As evening closed in, some of the enthusiastic inhabitants hastened to hang lamps, at judicious intervals, upon the trees; dancing became general, and continued till nearly midnight.

So cordial was our reception, and so many attentions were extended to us, that it was deemed desirable to make a due return for the welcome we had received. A suitable locality was consequently engaged, and preparations were made for a ball by subscription, to the inhabitants, at the invitation of the British officers. Lieutenant-Colonel Ximenes, of the 62nd regiment, assumed the management, and

an entertainment of suitable munificence appeared to afford universal delight.

We stayed three days at Santa Cruz, scarcely fulfilling the object of our coming, viz. to complete our supply of water, for nothing could be more tedious and insufficient than the means existing to replenish the casks. We had no opportunity to test the character of the interior; but, judging from the well-stored market at Santa Cruz, we deemed it amply productive. The glorious peak, nearly 12,000 feet high, raised its crest with aspiring significance; but we could only contemplate at a distance the imaginary toil of its ascent, and speculate upon the wonders it threatened to disclose. We subsequently saw it most distinctly at sea, at a distance, according to the captain's reckoning, of eighty miles.

Camels appeared to be the principal beasts of burthen, most of them, however, sorry animals in lean condition. The land contiguous to the town was sterile, and strewn with volcanic indicia; but the town itself was compact and neat, without any object to excite surprise or admiration. Spanish dresses and Spanish habits were the special features of the island, and we could hardly believe that we were not still in Spain. Vagrants of various orders abounded, and I have never met with a limited population so fraught with idlers and outcasts. We

left the island warmly impressed with the kindly character of its inhabitants, and stretched across the Atlantic for the Bermudas.

We had a most favourable passage as regards weather, got into the trade-winds, and glided smoothly over the ocean, scarcely finding it necessary to adjust a sail. Our quiet progress was only marred by the intestine disputes between the captain of the transport, John Scotland, and her crew. The captain (who was also owner) was one of those bland, oily-tongued individuals, whose outward bearing inveigled strangers into the belief that he was a most worthy person. We devoutly believed him to be so, and received his earlier attentions with the expectation that they were to be enduring. We could not then account for the discord existing between so apparently kind a creature, and a mutinous crew. He took care to impress us with the rascally character of his sailors; and as the acrimony between the two parties daily increased, we could not but persuade ourselves that he was the victim of an unhallowed combination. There was on board the "Anne" a company of artillery, under the command of the present Colonel Crawford, who was then a captain. It is my happiness still to number him amongst my most intimate friends; and if a high sense of honour, the genuine gallantry of a soldier,

and innumerable good qualities tend to prolong friendship, and fortify respect, esteem for such a man promises to be indissoluble. It has already subsisted upwards of thirty-eight years.

The disputes I have recorded, at length assumed so rough a shape, that some interference became indispensable. The master declared extreme measures to be the only alternative, and under our advice, an appeal was made to the "Commodore." The captain's representations prevailing, a man-of-war's boat was ordered alongside the "Anne," and the refractory hands were consigned to the ships of war. The second mate, one of the disaffected, on stepping over the ship's side to descend to the man-of-war's boat, paused for an instant to dash a tear from his cheek, and, addressing us with emphasis, said, though in faltering voice — "Gentlemen, I forgive you; you don't know that d—d old rascal, but you'll find him out!" We *did* find him out, indeed; and a viler specimen of capricious tyranny never existed.

Constant were the subsequent broils between us, until at length we kept him at arm's length, and would hold no communication with him, but through a non-commissioned officer. This is one of the few instances in which I have found that subordinates, of whatever calling, seldom resort to extreme resistance, without undue provocation at the hands of their superiors.

CHAP. VIII.

BERMUDA.—FIRST GLIMPSE OF AMERICA.—THE RIVER CHESAPEAKE.
 —ENTRANCE TO THE PATUXENT.—FIRST ESSAY ON SHORE.—A
 DIPLOMATIC MISSION.—DISEMBARKATION.—NOTTINGHAM.—MARLBOROUGH.—A
 FLOTILLA OF BOATS.—THEIR DESTRUCTION.—A
 WALK INTO THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY, WITH ITS RISK.—LIMIT OF
 THE PATUXENT, AND THE NATURE OF THE COUNTRY.

IN the early part of the month of August, 1814, we made the Bermudas. Considering the iron-bound nature of these islands, it was happy for us that the calmest weather prevailed. We were bound for St. George's, the principal harbour, and, aided by a black pilot, we steered our way through the rocky passage rent by nature, but so narrow and treacherous as to defy the ingress of more than one vessel at a time. Even then the pilot, stationed at the bow, only saw through the clear waters the avoidance of dangers from which his voice, promptly answered by the steersman, guided the vessel, while landsmen looked aghast at the seeming impossibilities of this contracted and tortuous passage. However, we, like many a predecessor, escaped from every impediment, and safely anchored in the spacious harbour, where innumerable vessels, from the loftiest

to the lowest pretensions, reposed in tranquil water. Men-of-war, troop-ships, transports, and even smaller craft, in numbers bespoke the warlike character of the rendezvous. An expedition from Bordeaux had preceded us ; and while Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane assumed the naval command, Major-General Ross was the deputed commander of our portion of the armament bound for the Chesapeake. General Gostling, with the 29th and 62nd regiments, so recently our sea companions, sailed northward, while we hastened to a part of the American continent, which seemed to offer easy access to us, and discomfiture to the enemy. We stayed but a short time at Bermuda, and, with little opportunity for extended research, left the island unimpressed with its boasted beauty and advantages. We all reported it to be hot, dusty, and undesirable. Our wants were supplied at a high cost, and we left it without regret.

The same placid weather that had distinguished our voyage from Teneriffe continued to favour us, and we made the Chesapeake, with no incident to excite our minds beyond an inquisitive restlessness, the natural precursor to a first acquaintance with a remarkable continent.

At the entrance to Chesapeake Bay, which appeared to be about twelve or fourteen miles in

breadth, we found the British line-of-battle ship *Asia*, of 74 guns, anchored; a frowning guard calculated to dispute the inlet with any unwelcome intruder. As we quitted the flanking points of Cape Henry and Cape Charles, we soon experienced a visible extension of this noble stream, and could almost fancy we were still at sea.

Distant forests denoted the woodland character of each shore; and we sailed up this vast collection of confluent waters (for numerous rivers pour out their tribute to the Chesapeake, some indeed of imposing depth and extent), impressed with the facilities afforded for the nurture of seamen, and the advantages possessed by America for rearing maritime defenders.

We were hardly conscious of our aggregate force until we brought up in the Potowmac River, where a numerous fleet betokened the gigantic demonstration for the chastisement of the enemy. After the lull of a few hours, we were again under way, and stood up the Chesapeake towards the Patuxent River—the stream we were destined to ascend.

It will never again fall to the lot of many living persons to witness the scene of belligerent splendour which awaited us. On a fine morning in the middle of August, light and balmy breezes prevailing and tempering a glowing sunshine, our fleet entered the

Patuxent. The river, at its mouth, was scarcely two miles in width. The wind was light and contrary, and the ships were compelled to beat up equally against the breeze and tide. They were consequently curiously intermingled, and passing each other upon opposite tacks.

Thus, in a narrow fresh-water river, the banks whereof were skirted with trees, and enriched with verdure to the very margin, was beheld a powerful fleet, consisting of several line-of-battle ships, frigates, troop-ships, bomb-vessels, sloops, brigs, schooners, and transports — together with numerous neat, but diminutive tenders; the whole decorated with the ensigns of their nation—red, white, or blue,—conformably with the colours of their respective divisions: the men-of-war, moreover, ornamented with the insignia of their commissions, the long and tapering pendants, and the decks of all the vessels thronged with troops arrayed for landing.

On the right bank of the river the shore was so bold (proper soundings having, of course, been taken) that at each instant we beheld the bowsprit of some leviathan grazing the branches of the overhanging foliage. Occasionally a vessel would ground, but almost as quickly regain the required depth; and there was an endless display of able seamanship and nice manœuvring. The air literally resounded with

the shrill pipe of the boatswain; and the loud, but measured, cadences of the men in the chains, who hove the lead and shouted forth the soundings, completed the harmony, and thrilled with pleasureable sensation in the ear.

The astonished slaves rested from their work in the fields contiguous; and the awe-struck peasants and yeomen of this portion of America beheld with perturbation, the tremendous preparations to devastate their blooming country.

This is no picture of the fancy warmed by the colouring of the imagination, but a scene preceding the capture of Washington, of which there must be still many living witnesses. The wind continuing light and the tide nearly at its lowest ebb, we were obliged to drop anchor, and restrain for a time our ardour for active operations.

We were authorised by our commanders to send on shore foraging parties to procure provisions, and had injunctions to treat with consideration all persons whom we met peacefully employed, and to pay a regulated price for such things as were voluntarily supplied to us. It was, however, hardly reasonable that, in an enemy's country, we should abstain from the comparative luxuries around us; and we certainly did rather peremptorily exact a portion of the stock

of our hosts, *malgré eux*, whenever we observed an indisposition to a voluntary surrender.

No sooner had we cast anchor in the Patuxent, than a boat was manned by our gunners, who were selected as a crew according to their previous experience. The late Captain Speer, Assistant-Surgeon Nelson, and myself, attended by a few armed artillerymen, signalised our first landing in America by the timely capture of some sheep ; and while in pursuit of them, we were greatly amused by a very humorous occurrence.

Mr. Nelson, an Irishman, who, after a short but dangerous service in the Peninsula, earnestly longed to revisit his family, had received his unlooked-for orders for America with no small chagrin. He was kind-hearted and good-tempered enough, but could not be brought to regard the present expedition with any favourable bias. We had laughed heartily during the voyage from Bermuda (where he had joined us) at his earnest deprecation of the undertaking ; and on the occasion of our first landing, he lost no time in delivering himself of a protest, under the following laughable circumstances : —

We had not proceeded far inland ere we beheld a negro slave hoeing in a field ; and to him our medical friend forthwith addressed himself, with the gravity of a plenipotentiary.

He represented the arduous struggle that England had maintained for the enfranchisement of Europe; the war, almost of existence, which she had waged; the wealth she had exhausted; and, above all, the sufferings of her sons on the tented plains. He then pourtrayed, in glowing colours, the treachery and faithless policy of America, in forcing men to traverse the Atlantic who required rest in their native country. The poor simple negro, to whom all this detail of grievances was so much gibberish, and whose knowledge of diplomacy was extremely limited, gazed at the speaker with stupified astonishment, let fall the arm that had grasped the hoe, and, in the broken accents and alto tones of his species, declared "he was a poor slave, and was utterly ignorant of the matter."

We had stood aloof to listen to this strange conference, but could endure it no longer; even the men of our party joined us in a boisterous *éclat de rire*; and our peals of laughter recalled the doctor from his embassy. The scene was frequently afterwards the subject of mirthful reminiscence, and no one laughed at it more heartily than our Hibernian friend himself.

We still ascended the Patuxent; and at length the point of debarkation was determined upon at the hamlet of St. Benedict. Every available boat had

been put in requisition, and the major part of the force was landed. The troops bivouacked for the night, and late on the following day began a slow and tedious march. Some few guns had been landed — nine-pounders, six-pounders, and three-pounders; but devoid of draught-horses, the guns and store-waggons were drawn by men, principally sailors from the fleet, denominated “small-arm men;” and as the country became undulatory, hence incessant halts and delay.

The towns of Nottingham and Marlborough (which might with more propriety be called villages) were successively reached, when the main object of the movement became evident. A formidable flotilla of gunboats, commanded by the American Commodore Barney, had continued to ascend the stream, pursued by the launches and barges of British men-of-war, well manned and armed and plied with vigorous energy by our tars. At a short distance from Marlborough, the river appeared suddenly to terminate, at a place called “Pig’s Point;” and there the American commodore, perceiving the futility of further defence, resolved to abandon and destroy his flotilla. He consequently decamped with his men, having first laid the necessary trains, with that certain means of ignition the smouldering slowmatch, calculated to consign his fleet of boats to destruction.

We approached Pig's Point, in time to hear the explosion of boat after boat; and out of the whole flotilla, two only fell into our hands. These were snatched from annihilation by the boldness of one or two sailors, who risked their lives by daringly withdrawing the ignited slow match, as it was gradually creeping towards the fatal train.

I have often reflected with astonishment, upon the marvellous indiscretion of many individuals who, thoughtless of the danger they incurred, would venture beyond prudential limits into the enemy's country. At Pig's Point I formed a casual acquaintance with an officer of the marine artillery; and we two, enchanted by the scenery around us, made a wide inspection of the contiguous landscape. We walked over verdant fields, enticed further and further inland by the fresh beauty which every step disclosed, visited several pretty habitations, chatted with their occupants, accepted their hospitality (which in this instance was frankly tendered), and lingered so long before our return to Pig's Point, as to endanger our retreat from a spot so fascinating.

We found, to our dismay, the army already on the move, and only a few men-of-war's boats remaining to carry off the remnant of a store of tobacco, which had been found in that locality. But for the few craft left to secure this booty, we should in all pro-

bability have become most ignobly prisoners of war. We each received a severe reprimand for our rashness, and were quite conscious that it was merited.

This sweet neighbourhood has always constituted my *beau idéal* of American rural scenery. The exquisite undulations around Marlborough were not only highly cultivated and fruitful, but from verdant eminences we were enabled to survey the river and mark its graceful sinuosities. From its opposite bank I had, as I have related, dived further inland than prudence warranted; but I received an impression of the richness and tranquil beauty of the locality, to which I have clung with a kind of romantic fondness. Almost every land displays some object calculated to please and interest the traveller; but whenever I desire to conjure up sweet and gentle scenery, most nearly resembling the richest English landscape, I am irresistibly carried back to the banks of the Patuxent.

The course of this river from the Chesapeake (at least 100 miles) was remarkable for the varied pictorial nature of its views. It was of practicable depth for all the ends of the commerce necessary to the population on its banks, to its limit at Pig's Point, where also it retained the breadth and appearance of a goodly stream. There, however, it suddenly terminated, or rather began, since that was the

head of the stream. It did not rise or exhaust itself in morass or lake, or branch off into dikes and swamp; but there, as we approached its termination, came to a dead stop, forming a sort of diminutive bay, the margin whereof was dry and gravelly.

CHAP. IX.

MOVE UPON WASHINGTON.—THE AMERICAN PROVINCIAL RUMOURS.
 —BLADENSBURGH AND ITS RESULT.—THE CITY INVESTED, ITS
 PUBLIC BUILDINGS, ETC. DESTROYED.—CONDUCT OF THE AMERI-
 CANS — FLIGHT OF THEIR GENERAL AND THE PRESIDENT. —
 HURRICANE. — RETURN OF GENERAL ROSS TO ST. BENEDICT. —
 SEA-HORSE FRIGATE — HER STRATAGEM TO REPEL DANGER.

MEANWHILE our commanders had resolved (hastily, it was said) to take advantage of the panic which the joint marine and military movement had occasioned, and to march upon Washington. We were subsequently by some means furnished with various provincial journals, and from them we learned how widely spread had been the consternation which at that period prevailed. There appeared to be an utter ignorance, not only of our numbers and designs, but even of the names of our commanders.

From the same sources we learned that Rear-Admiral (afterwards Sir George) Cockburn, who had long been actively engaged in directing desultory operations in the Chesapeake and its tributary streams, had by his activity and daring so incensed the Americans, that their provincial press teemed with sarcasm and abuse against that gallant officer.

It would be difficult to overrate the bitterness with which he was assailed, and a stray Yankee with whom I casually conversed, declared to me, that "if Cock-burn were taken, they would hang him upon the first tree, as sure as fate."

The most conflicting accounts were at this time published as to our object and numerical force, and the most preposterous reports were in circulation; but, judging from miscellaneous rumours from various provincial localities with specific dates, and a nice quotation of hours and minutes, the prevailing notion seemed to be, that Lord Hill was the Commander-in-chief, and 30,000 men the amount of his army.

Meanwhile the country through which General Ross had already advanced, with a force not exceeding 5000 men, in many parts resembled the rural districts of Old England. There was at intervals a wide extent of waste and forest, the latter greatly prevailing. The orchards and gardens appeared to be faithful imitations of our own rural horticulture, and even the fields of tobacco simply reminded us, in their distant aspect, of the turnip-fields of our native land. Soft undulations, with occasional sweeps of park-like pasture, convinced us by their richness and verdure, and the sleekness of the browsing cattle, that we were in a land of

favoured pastoral pretensions; and the whole, notwithstanding the superabundance of grove and forest, conveyed to my mind good cultivation where practicable, and thriving fertility.

I saw but few men, except such as were stricken with age and infirmity; but the forsaken females—witnesses of their country's misfortunes—exhibited, in their woe-wrought countenances and by their heavy sighs, a depth of anxiety and misery which has clung most painfully to my memory. When we occasionally halted, and advanced to their doors to ask for water or cider (the common beverage of the country), a nearer approach to them disclosed such unmistakeable anguish, that the stoniest heart must have felt remorse in the contemplation of the outrage upon their domestic peace. The hand that offered refreshment to an enemy seemed to tremble, as if conscious that it was ministering to the destroyers of its kindred. It is doubtless a trite reflection; but nevertheless I know of no other incident more painfully calculated to elicit sorrowful emotions, than a close contemplation of the weak and defenceless victims of a nation's broils. I solemnly aver that the features of those grief-stricken creatures often haunt me in the present day.

After the destruction of Barney's flotilla, a night's pause ensued, and then a dash at the capital was the

upshot of our chiefs' deliberations. Some say that enterprise was premeditated; but from my recollection of the reports of the period, I have ever thought it was a hasty resolve. However, after a stifling and painful march by dusty roads and through a remarkable forest, the troops at casual intervals fretted by false alarms of interception, the capital of the United States was doomed to be assailed, and her public buildings and works defiled and prostrated, by a mere handful of British troops. The force of General Ross, on that memorable occasion, consisted of the 4th, 21st, 44th, and 85th regiments, a battalion of marines, three companies of the Royal Artillery, a detachment of artillery drivers (a corps long since disused), and an auxiliary enrolment of tars, drafted from the fleet to render general services. These last were grotesquely accoutred, but proved eminently useful, notwithstanding the wild occasional outbreak from the limits of prescribed order. The whole force could hardly have exceeded 5000 men.

The guns and waggons had, in the first instance, been dragged by men furnished with "man-harness;" but the roads, hilly and capriciously stony and sandy, offered such obstructions to their progress, that all but one six-pounder were sent afloat at Marlborough; and that one gun, under Captain Craw-

ford, was destined to fire away at Bladensburgh, under cover of an eminence, against heavy battering-ordnance, manned and worked by our *quondam* enemy, Commodore Barney, who was wounded and made prisoner; so singularly mal-appointed was the adventurous force on that daring foray. Again, in penetrating into an enemy's country, the want of cavalry constituted so manifest a disadvantage, that it was indispensable to substitute a rude expedient. Consequently, the thirty or forty artillery drivers, ready horsemen, were hastily converted into a make-shift cavalry, and, mounted on stray horses, became, under the prompt leadership of Captain Lemprière, R. A., a force conjured up for the occasion, which rendered the most effective service.

To me this expedition was sadly perplexing. My charge without draft-horses was of difficult and tedious management; and I had a senior of the Field Train Department in the field, who was scarcely less favoured than myself. I had to toil in the rear, and to oppose patience and perseverance to multiplied obstacles. I consequently heard much, saw little of the most stirring occurrences, and from personal observation am ill-calculated to relate the incidents of the fierce battle of Bladensburgh, fought on the 24th of August, with its train of fortuitous consequences. We suffered, comparatively with the

paucity of our force, a frightful loss; but never had the honour of the British arms been better sustained. To me it is a subject of pride to have been, even thus adversely, on this bold adventure.

The hasty investment of Washington, with the destruction of its public library and buildings, has on international grounds been so detailed, sifted, and discussed that, but for my humble, though distant participation in its capture, I should hardly have ventured to approach the subject. That we should have been allowed thus to seize upon and despoil it, must be considered a blot upon the military character of the United States, which no sophistry can expunge.

The village of Bladensburgh, and the bridge over the Potowmac, were so swept by the heavy cannon of the Americans (served by Commodore Barney and his fellow-fugitives from the gun-boats), that the utmost peril menaced any approach towards them. Formidable batteries peered down upon their assailants with such an aspect of destructiveness, that had the troops on that upland, under General Winder, been really staunch and determined, it was hardly possible for the British to have forced their position. But braving a murderous fire from well-planted guns, and defying the triple force opposed to them, the English drove their enemies from their stronghold,

and sent them scattered and dismayed, even beyond the capital. Either the exaggerated reports of our numbers, or the *prestige* of the British name, caused a panic in the American lines, for their commander (Winder) was said to have himself fled with more than ordinary precipitation. Certain, however, it is that, as against the English army, he was not again heard of.

At New Orleans, and elsewhere, we had to encounter obloquy and disparagement; but in justice the Americans ought never to forget the pusillanimity of their troops on the heights of Bladensburg. Our discomfiture at New Orleans (of which hereafter) was the result of casualties, gradual in their development; but here was a want of firmness and of courage impulsively exhibited, which the loud outcry against violated national law may tend to cloak, but which no bombast or false assumption can relieve.

Jealous of the honour of my country and acquainted with facts, I have no hesitation in broadly asserting, that in this notable instance the army of the United States stood dishonoured and without excuse.

The march upon Washington (in which I did not join) was effected that very evening. The city was left, by the flight of its defenders, to the mercy of an

enemy, and the result is too well known. Every thing in the shape of public property was consigned to the flames, destruction stalked abroad, and on reflection even the victors grieved over the summary and cruel havoc they had made.

The Senate House and other public buildings were ransacked and destroyed; the dockyards and vessels of war on the stocks shared in the general conflagration; cannon were mutilated or spiked; arms, and every sort of warlike implement, were broken up, scattered, or submerged. The sacrifice of property was immense, and the whole scene of explosion, spoliation, and ruin, combined to stamp such fierce and indiscriminate excess with a barbarian character. It was the result of a hasty and unreflecting excitement, which hurried its votaries to such ungenerous extremities.

In the midst of the universal devastation, not even the President's residence was respected. That edifice (which contained preparations for a banquet to the anticipated defenders of the capital) shared the common lot of other public structures. The viands for the feast were devoured by self-invited guests, who, unrestrained by etiquette, freely helped themselves. My friend Speer and a party of artillerymen were indefatigable in the work of general destruction.

Washington not being much more than a league distant from Bladensburgh, caused such a glare to light up the surrounding country, that those in the rear were amazed by these manifest symptoms of conflagration, and at times were startled by some terrific explosion; but it was not until the following day that we could learn the full extent of the enemy's loss.

Winder had fled; Maddison, the President, had also fled; and the capital was destroyed; but the Americans, it was reported, were about to attempt the chastisement of their invaders, when there arose, in the afternoon of the 25th, a hurricane of so appalling a description, that death and extensive mutilation followed in its train, and paralised every war-like project on both sides. It also, as we afterwards learned, occasioned many disasters to the British boats and craft which at that moment scoured the Patuxent. This was a storm of more than ordinary violence; but it was surprising how often, at that season, the brightest morning was in the afternoon obscured by tempestuous clouds, and heavy peals of thunder.

The permanent occupation of Washington being undesirable, perhaps impracticable (although of that, with our command of the Potowmac, I am not so sure), General Ross determined to retrace his steps; and

by a night march, and by other well-planned arrangements, a few days saw the whole of his remaining force again at St. Benedict, and safely re-embarked.

On his progress to the original point of debarkation the gallant general found, on his arrival at Nottingham, that the navy had not been insensible to his possible difficulties, but had with great exertion piloted up to that puny port a brig of war, to present her broadside, if requisite, to a pursuing enemy. Arriving early in the day at Nottingham, General Ross was greeted with vociferous cheers from the well-manned yards of the brig. This enthusiasm extended to the crews of the numerous small craft; for the river swarmed with barges and launches of men-of-war, as also with small rigged vessels, previously the property of traders in the numberless streams branching from the Chesapeake. The jaded troops took up the salutation; and a part of them, with voices subdued by fatigue, prolonged this merited welcome.

There had been vast exertions made, in order to force through the devious reaches of the Patuxent this brig of war to the required point; but it struck me that, had the American forces, superior in numbers as they were reported to have been, succeeded in driving before them the invading British troops,

the brig of war could hardly have hoped to escape from her intricate position.

There was no end to the idle gossip of many who had advanced into the city. Almost every one you met had some relic to produce, snatched from the possession of "Maddison;" and the reputed guests at his predisposed banquet (prepared to celebrate a victory over the British) were too numerous for the house to hold. I examined with nice curiosity a pair of "diamond" shoe-buckles (unmistakingly paste) which came from that inexhaustible source; and it was really amusing to listen to the pretensions of those who professed to have signalised themselves by the entertainment, or acquisitions derived from the fugitive President.

The British were compelled to leave behind them at Bladensburgh, a considerable number of wounded officers and men; and it was generally understood that Commodore Barney, wounded and captured himself, had given a pledge to the general that they should be humanely treated. The dead were too numerous to be lightly estimated, but circumstances compelled us to leave them unburied. I scarcely know why such mistrust should have been fostered; but the wounded about to be abandoned conceived an intense dread of unkind treatment. The sequel proved them to have been mistaken; for, on the con-

trary, the Americans nobly established a character for humanity.

Various were the enterprises of which we heard; but none appeared to furnish such sterling satisfaction as the attempt of Captain Gordon, of the "Sea Horse" frigate, against Alexandria on the Potowmac river. He was a man exhibiting a most pleasing combination of the gentleman and the sailor; and the loss of a leg in a former action added to the sympathy which his address and demeanour could hardly fail to inspire. Having passed a narrow of the river termed the Kettle-bottoms, formidable preparations awaited his return; and the ready tact of a cool and intrepid mind saved him from serious loss, or possible capture. Elevating his larboard guns, by shifting his ballast and weight to starboard, he was by his unlooked-for stratagem enabled to sweep with his cannon, heights fortified by guns planted for the purpose, and supported by a large body of well-armed men. Not only did he thus clear the heights of an opposing enemy, but actually landed his men and destroyed the enemy's well-planned defences. Captain Gordon was so general a favourite, that his signal gallantry and success on this occasion awakened a spontaneous burst of exultation from the whole united force.

A few days' quiet in the Patuxent, to replenish

the water-casks from wells dug along the river side, and a move to the Potowmac, and thence again to the Patuxent, as if to perplex and confound the calculations of the enemy, were but the precursors of a further hostile undertaking.

CHAP. X.

FORAGING PARTIES FROM THE FLEET — THE DANGER ATTENDING THEM. — DIVING FOR LOST TREASURE. — SUMMARY MODE OF CURING AN UNRULY TEMPER. — DRUMMER MORTON. — MOVE TO THE PATAPSCO. — DISEMBARKATION OF THE TROOPS. — MARCH TOWARDS BALTIMORE. — DEATH OF GENERAL ROSS.

DURING this lull scarcely a day or night passed, without divers parties from the British squadron roaming through the country, on foraging excursions. My late lamented friend, Captain Speer, was the life and soul of such adventures from our transport, and I was his most zealous coadjutor. With a few picked men, acting alternately as a boat's crew or a predatory band, we literally scoured the country; visited farmhouses even so late as midnight; aroused — and doubtless not a little terrified — their sleeping inmates, and insisted upon the pick of the pantry, yards, or pigsty, upon our own terms.

I am afraid we sadly lacked consideration for the harassed inhabitants of this war-girt coast; but this I will aver, that we endeavoured to inspire them with as much confidence as our purpose would allow, and certainly on no one occasion resorted to violence.

We paid where payment was practicable, but were not over-scrupulous in helping ourselves. We ran many serious risks, for patrolling parties of the Americans were abroad; but for these we kept our eyes and ears watchfully open.

We certainly enjoyed the hazardous excitement of our excursions, and met with many amusing incidents. For instance: we one night summoned a slumbering farmer from his bed, who, in a parley from his chamber window, so solemnly protested that he had not a fowl or pig upon his premises and employed such singular oaths to fortify his word, that we laughed outright at the man's ill-disguised duplicity. However, we loudly pronounced our disbelief, and commanded him to descend with a lantern, or abide the consequences. Down, therefore, he was compelled to come, half-apparelled, and to accompany us to the contiguous outhouses. No sooner were the doors opened and the light intruded, than there arose such a cackling of fowls of various species, that our host stood convicted of something near akin to perjury; and we made uncommonly free with his stock.

On another occasion our party was busily employed in cutting vegetables, and putting them into sacks brought on shore for the purpose. The garden in which we were thus employed was only divided from

the road by a ragged hedge, and deep bank. The moon was up and shed a vivid light, and nothing broke the stillness of the night but our zealous toil. Suddenly our attention was arrested by the distant clatter of horses' hoofs, and we made sure the American cavalry was on our track.

A sudden pause in our labours, and a rapid order to prostrate ourselves beneath the hedge was instantly obeyed, when a few peering eyes discerned the approach of some five or six mounted yeomen in peaceful attire. A hasty consultation determined our next move; and the sudden spring of our entire party into the road, both surprised and alarmed the American horsemen. Their bridles were seized, and they themselves were commanded to alight, and prepare for conduct to the fleet.

Then arose a wail of lamentation and such entreaties to be spared from capture, that we affected to relent, and exacted terms to which they most readily assented. We made each man vow solemnly that no patrolling party should be informed of our whereabouts; and, with this frail assurance, we allowed them to depart; and thus ended the unmeaning manœuvre of their capture and release.

Again, one fine afternoon found us on a small farm, giving chase to a very wild calf. In vain we tried to pin him in a corner, and essayed his capture

by a noose. He bounded away again and again before the eyes of the peasant farmer and his wife, who seemed to enjoy our repeated disappointments. At length one of our party with mock gravity made a running knot in the rope he held, and with feigned earnestness threatened to hang up the man unless he should instantly secure the calf. The farmer exhibited real symptoms of terror and prayed earnestly to be spared, whilst his poor wife darted from the doorway of her house, and shrieked so earnestly for mercy to her husband, that we found the joke had been carried too far; and we actually made a purse amongst ourselves, to repair the fright we had occasioned her.

On some of these wild excursions we boated up creeks and inlets, over waters so clear that every crawfish (and they were innumerable) could be distinctly seen on the weedy bottom. The turpin or water-tortoise abounded, and was continually emerging and disappearing with the activity of a moorhen. Towards evening porpoises were found gambolling in the shoalest inlets; and there was an everlasting perturbation of these otherwise quiet waters, which seemed instinct with animal life.

How often did we alarm, and then compose by courteous suavity, some tranquil little family, and sit down in their neat parlour, survey the tiny stove and

well-polished fire-irons, and become reminded of our own dear land, by these faithful copies of her descendants in another hemisphere! I remember, on one occasion, sitting in the tidiest imaginable rural parlour, and enjoying a lively chat with a pretty, interesting, well-educated girl, about twenty years of age, and with her respectable father. They were both distinguished by superior mental cultivation; and, after an hour of agreeable conversation, we parted with tokens of mutual cordiality, and moralised upon the painfulness of national enmities.

It was not, however, always that these undertakings terminated thus harmlessly. Our friend and companion of the "Anne" transport, Captain (now Colonel) Crawford, R.A., was induced to take a few of his men, and to accompany the skipper on one of these little raids; but the expedition had not proceeded far inland, ere an American mounted party actually approached. Flight and pursuit were instantaneous; but most of the pursued outstripped the pursuers, and just reached their boat in time hastily to push off, and thus to save themselves from capture.

An ill-directed volley was fired at them, which riddled the gunwale of the boat, and frightened its living freight, without doing other mischief. Two of Captain Crawford's men and a sailor of the

transport were, however, made prisoners; and the skipper, a fat unwieldy fellow, ran up to his middle in water ere he could clutch the boat, was pulled into her like a bag of ballast, and just saved to be, as he had ever been, the torment of his crew.

While thus at anchor, our individual prowess in deep water was suddenly tested. The wife of a soldier, who was known by the familiar name of "Kitty Smith," was returning from a visit from some contiguous ship, to the "Anne" transport. Kitty had hoarded up some fifty dollars, which for better security she carried in her pocket, the strings whereof were as frail as (if rumour spoke truly) Kitty herself. The effort to seize the ropes and to climb up the ship's side, caused Kitty's pocket strings to break, and the pocket, with its weighty contents, was instantly submerged.

Poor Kitty set up an awful wail of lamentation, and so touched the heart of Speer, that he shouted out for volunteers to second him in diving for the recovery of the lost treasure. The appeal was answered by myself, and by a drummer named Morton, a tall youth about nineteen years of age, who was an accomplished swimmer. Remember, we were not far distant from the junction of the Patuxent with the Chesapeake, where line-of-battle ships had floated.

The current was strong, the steam turbid, and the general aspect of the water repulsive. Still there was a charitable daring in the enterprise, and, under the example of that gallant fellow Speer, we plunged in, and with indefatigable hardihood dived in every possible direction in quest of the pocket. Divers (and I may truly boast to have been one of no mean pretensions) are well aware that, to prove their efficiency it is necessary to bring up "a receipt" from the bottom. Numberless eyes from the ship were anxiously watching our movements, and we all took care faithfully to attest our earnestness in the task we had undertaken.

In vain, however, did we toil, and clutch at every thing our hands encountered at the bottom. Every reiterated effort was but a repeated failure, and poor Kitty's pocket evaded our grasp. The poor creature wept for days over her lost capital (to her a little fortune); but the volunteer trio of the deep lost no credit with the men, by their courageous efforts to recover her loss.

Here let me anticipate for an instant, and record the after-fates of Kitty, and of drummer Morton. Kitty Smith, although not an ill-favoured body, had, when angrily excited, a most venomous tongue. On our subsequent voyage, she conceived some resentment against Lieutenant Kinnaird, of the Royal

Artillery Drivers, who had risen from the ranks, and whose outward appearance did not betoken high gentility.

The soldiers, by the way, are acutely sensible of such a defect; and Kitty, like them, did not highly respect Kinnaird's pretensions. She consequently, on some trifling provocation, opened against him such a volley of abuse, that her coarse expletives shocked every body, and excited the indignation of the officers. In vain was Kitty commanded to be silent and to moderate her language. Every expostulation served only to invoke renewed vituperation.

At length the men were authorised by somebody to duck her; and with the utmost celerity a small rope was run through a block at the extremity of the main yardarm, and being made fast to the waist of the infuriate Kitty, she was run up, and suddenly lowered with a rapid fall into the sea, until by repeated submersions her fury was tamed, and she begged for mercy. Thereafter, she was the quietest creature on board. One of the amusing facts in this disciplinary process, was the zeal of her husband in "lending a hand" to correct her unruly temper.

Drummer Morton was within a few months killed in the batteries before New Orleans; and shockingly

wounded he died, poor wretch, uttering imprecations.

When the fleet next weighed anchor from the Patuxent,, and again entered Chesapeake Bay, its destination soon became manifest. It proceeded up the bay, and passing the town of Annapolis within observable distance (which, descried through the telescope, exhibited unusual perturbation), we reached the utmost limit of this noble bay, where an abrupt bend to the left connects it with the Petapsco river.

There line-of-battle ships and heavier men-of-war, yielding to the decreasing depth of water, soon dropped their anchors; but the lighter frigates, sloops-of-war, gun-brigs, and bomb-vessels proceeded onwards towards Baltimore, which was visible from our decks, though not very distinctly seen.

Doubtless proper soundings had been taken, and the true nature of the navigation of the river ascertained; but it was a rare sight to us in the transports, and betokened the zeal of the Royal Navy, to observe frigates crowding all sail, assisted by their boats a-head, in order to force their keels through the soft mud which impeded their ingress.

A joint plan of action had, it was understood, been determined upon; and naval officers were chuckling over the warm work to be looked for, in the an-

ticipated assault upon Fort Henry. Captain Napier (now Vice-Admiral Sir Charles), who commanded the "Euryalus" frigate, was reported to be the destined leader; and his fire-eating qualities were even then fully understood.

Under the able superintendence of Rear-Admiral (afterwards Sir Pulteney) Malcolm, the troops were safely landed at North Point, on the left bank of the Petapsco, and commenced their march towards Baltimore on the afternoon of the 12th of September. The road lay through a generally flat but cultivated district, much interspersed with wood. The Americans appeared to have selected one or two points for entrenchment and defence, and to have abandoned them either from after-reflection, or from a hasty dread of interruption. Very shortly, however, resistance seemed inevitable; musketry was heard, and at the very outset, almost the first person who fell mortally wounded was General Ross himself.

A recent, but short-lived, regulation had assigned to general officers, as a distinguishing mark, such an edging or fringe of white feathers on the cocked hat as had heretofore been worn by drum-majors. It was universally deemed to have originated in bad taste, and to be hallowed by no elevated *prèstige*. In this instance it was supposed to have served as a special mark to a hostile rifleman, and the gallant

Ross thereby found a soldier's grave. He expired commending his family to his country's protection, and, it was generally reported, exhorting the soldiers to reserve their fire and to use the bayonet.

I know of no event within my memory (except the after death of the Princess Charlotte) which more universally awakened an intensity of sorrow. Every face betokened grief, and many hundreds were constrained to give vent to their tears. All ranks and classes displayed a marked despondency, and the mourning of the heart was visible in every countenance.



RESISTANCE OF THE AMERICANS — THEIR DEFEAT. — WATER COMMUNICATION. — ADVANCE UPON BALTIMORE. — RETREAT. — GENERAL MILLER. — RE-EMBARCATION. — SAIL FROM THE PETAPSCO. — THE POTOWMAC. — ITS SHORES. — A CHAPEL IN THE WILDS.

GENERAL ROSS had been laid low, and scarcely had he fallen ere the real nature of the contest became apparent. A formidable American force, formed on the outskirt of a wood on the left of the main road, inclosed with a continuous fence of high posts and rails, and supported by artillery, opposed the advancing columns, and for some short time sustained a murderous conflict. The British artillery, especially the guns under the late Captain Carmichael, did great execution, and created a panic, of which the infantry promptly availed themselves, and the route of the enemy became inevitable. The Americans fled with precipitation, leaving the wood, their *point d'appui*, strewn with their dead and dying.

Within the wood, and at an inconsiderable distance from the road, was a farmhouse, flanked by cattle sheds (some of which had taken fire, which

was with difficulty extinguished), and immediately adjoining the house was a rural school-room. These were converted into a hospital, to which the wounded of both countries were as quickly as possible removed, and one or two surgeons from the enemy's army remained with the British surgeons to minister to the necessities of their suffering countrymen. The army passed the night in this locality, and early the following morning moved forward towards Baltimore.

I know not whether the Americans had named this place "School House Wood," or whether the British so distinguished it, but by that appellation, however it originated, I have always remembered it. I passed the night under the shelter of a cattle shed, but sleep was impossible, so ceaseless and agonising were the cries of the wounded. The following morning I returned to North Point to secure a fresh supply of ammunition, and regained the wood late in the afternoon of the 13th by a water route from the Petapsco (Bear's Creek), which had been essayed by some rocket boats, in order to keep open a ready communication with the army.

Nothing could be more peaceful and picturesque than this offshoot of the Petapsco. We sailed over quiet waters, surrounded on all hands by nature's most decorative fertility. A succession of tiny lakes, without an apparent outlet, where the all-prevailing

foliage and verdure seemed to bar our further progress, only excited a keener zest for the fresh beauties that were anon to dawn upon us. Rounding diminutive headlands, this sweet stream conducted us through a succession of scenery at once tranquil and fascinating. It seemed a positive sin to disturb this exquisite tranquillity by the occasional explosion of rockets. Signals of this kind were, however, indispensable to notify the precise point of communication, which it was so essential to both services to secure. A suitable landing-place having been selected, about a mile from the wood, and the rockets having indicated the precise locality of the boats, which now followed the rocket craft in quick succession, the wounded, capable of removal, were sent down in carts for embarkation.

I bent my way to School House Wood by a rough road first threaded on this occasion; and on my way I met with several carts laden with the wounded. Their piteous groans, as the ever-recurring inequalities of surface caused painful jolts, and consequent irritation to their fresh and inflamed wounds, awakened the deepest commiseration. As I looked upon the wan countenances of the sufferers, and caught their plaintive accents, I moralised upon the change from wild excitement to suffering prostration, and bethought me of the fitful phases of glory. While

these unhappy men were about to be consigned to the careful nursing of their respective ships, I regained my uneasy quarters in the cattle shed adjoining the farm school house. It was yet daylight when I strolled through the wood but yesterday the scene of carnage, and sorrowfully contemplated the recumbent dead. They were numerous, and a pause of twenty-four hours had not tended to relax their rigid features. It is needless to dilate upon so sad a spectacle. The issue of an all-absorbing contest no longer agitated them. Their final lot was fixed.

I strayed mournfully along, until I suddenly lighted upon the corpse of a young American officer, stretched out as he had fallen. He had worn a good pair of Hessian boots, which almost necessarily attracted my attention. Reflecting that they could no longer benefit the lifeless wearer, I resolved to appropriate them to myself, and stooping down to pull them off I suddenly relented, and inwardly denouncing the spoliation of the dead, hastily forbore, and cursed my first intention.

An after walk, and reflection of ten minutes, somewhat abated my scruples, and I returned to the spot unsentimentally disposed, when, lo! a less fastidious wanderer had anticipated my last resolve, and possessed himself of the booty. In the sequel I was

not, however, sorry that my first and better resolution had, *malgré moi*, been abetted, and that I had been spared the perpetration of an ignoble deed.

I returned with the expectation of passing the night under that miserable cattle shed, and tried in vain to sleep. The ghastly field I had so recently surveyed, and the piercing cries of the wounded in the contiguous hospital, proved fatal to repose, and I lay brooding over the stern realities of war.

Since our landing at North Point rain had partially fallen, but now it descended as the summer rains of that hemisphere do descend. The shed sufficiently sheltered me and my party (a small detachment of gunners to aid in the transport of two ball cartridge carts), but we were not long to enjoy exemption from the elements. I heard my name loudly pronounced by a non-commissioned officer, and received a summons from the commanding officer of artillery to move forward to the bivouac near Baltimore with all dispatch.

We were quickly on our way, assisted by a few small-arm men from the fleet. The road, flanked by ditches, was broad and in tolerable condition, but the rain, which continued to fall in one unceasing torrent, had surcharged the ditches and completely inundated the causeway. The night was dark, but we groped

our way along, ankle deep in water, constantly animated to increased labour (for we had no horses to draw the carts) by the incessant glare from the Petapsco ahead of us, where two bomb vessels were pouring out a continuous fire of shells upon Fort Henry, the stronghold of the Americans.

Throughout the night did the fuses indicate the fiery course of the destructive missiles. Their precise effect we could not learn, but that it must have been considerable we inferred from a subsequent published censure by the American authorities, which found circulation in their newspapers. The defective American gunnery was condemned, and contrasted with the superior science of the British, whose shells from the bomb-vessels were described to have been directed with unerring precision into Fort Henry.

I arrived before Baltimore late at night, thoroughly wet to the skin, and having caused the ammunition to be well protected by a covering of blankets, I sought out the commanding officer (the present Colonel Mitchel, R. A.), and with some difficulty found him most comfortably sheltered for the night in a small pigsty, where he was perfectly protected from the rain, which still fell with unabated force. Laughing at the convenient lodging in which he was so well accommodated, he recommended me to take care of

myself, and I joyfully made for a large and blazing camp-fire contiguous, where I hoped to dry my saturated garments. The rain opportunely ceased, so I stripped to the skin to dry my linen, and had just effected this desirable object when the clouds resumed their libation, and I, *miserrimus*, was again drenched.

After a toilsome march, a soaking of some hours, and now standing without a discoverable spot of dry ground to repose upon, I naturally looked about me for any kind of shelter. Hard by was a barn, filled to its outer margin by men of the 21st regiment, most of whom were sleeping soundly. I intruded modestly, and was reproved by a gruff voice, demanding, "What the devil I did there?" A short but pathetic entreaty to be spared a little space just to lie down out of the rain, was answered by a good-natured move of the poor fellow, so that I just contrived to edge in, and, notwithstanding my wet condition, exhaustion inspired somnolency, and I snatched a few hours of welcome sleep.

Early in the morning, about three or four o'clock, all was activity and bustle; and in perfect darkness a noiseless disposition of the army was effected. Unconscious of the intentions of the commanding officer (Colonel Brooke, of the 44th regiment, who had succeeded to the command on the death of

General Ross), but fully expecting a hostile movement against Baltimore, we soon perceived, by the countermarch of the leading columns, that a retreat had been determined upon. The prevailing notion was that it had been arranged for the storming party, under Captain Napier, R. N., with the co-operation of the army, to assail Fort Henry; the whole to be supported in that object by vessels of war whose draught of water would allow of a practicable approach. The enemy had, however, thrown a boom across the harbour of such strength as to defy all efforts to force it; and Sir Alexander Cochrane had consequently notified the impossibility of affording, by the navy, the desired, and indeed indispensable, co-operation.

Military counsel had been taken, and, considering the paucity of our force, the strength of Baltimore, and the formidable American army assembled for its protection, which was variously estimated at from 12,000 to 20,000 men, and well supported by strong fortifications, it was deemed too hazardous an experiment; and, consequently, we found ourselves retrograding to North Point, whence we had so recently set forth.

The army reached School House Wood, the rain still continuing to pour down, and there halted for about an hour. The march was resumed, the road

now having become deep and miry, and no interruption to our retreat occurred until about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when the sudden appearance of some American horsemen seemed to indicate a disposition to attack. The bugles sounded a halt, and in an inconceivably short space of time the troops were formed in column on the right of the road, and there awaited the expected onset. The rain had just ceased, and while all was on the tiptoe of expectation, a ludicrous scene excited the mirth of the army.

A sailor, one of the small-arm men, burning to meet the enemy (but equally reckless of his own safety, and unincumbered with any regard for tactics), jumped over a high flight of post and rails, separating the road from some open fields, and rushed singly towards the enemy, uttering nautical defiance. This Quixotic feat awakened an excessive burst of laughter, which was much increased by a naval officer bounding over the rails, and giving chase to the erratic tar, who was recalled to his unaccustomed duty by a few well-applied strokes from the officer's scabbard.

The interruption to the march having been found to proceed merely from a small reconnoitring detachment of the enemy, and there being no appearance of a formidable demonstration, the retreat was

continued until within a mile or two of North Point, where the army bivouacked for the night.

The rain had altogether ceased, and was succeeded by a cold and tempestuous wind. I passed the night in a negro hut, exceedingly small, and with a boarded floor, no easy bed to those who had merely a single blanket to repose upon. Moreover the door was ill-fitted, and left half an inch at least between it and the threshold, so that we had the benefit of continual fitful gusts, which, after our ceaseless wetting, kept us much cooler than we had any desire to be. I have cause to remember this comfortless night, because one of my companions proved himself to be, in after times, a man of energetic courage and high military capacity.

General Miller, of Peruvian celebrity, was then in the Field Train Department, and on this identical expedition. He formed one of a party of three (in addition to the negro occupant), who turned, and groaned, and shivered, but slept little, on this merciless floor.

The career of that gallant officer was as brilliant as it was surprising. The "Quarterly Review" of October, 1828, in a review of his "Memoirs," edited by his brother John Miller (also of the Field Train Department), evoked a high degree of enthusiasm in the public mind towards him. Having entered the

liberating service in Chili, simply as a captain, notwithstanding the adverse *prestige* of his foreign birth and heretical creed, he rose to be a general of division, and the first guerilla chief in that eventful struggle.

Possessed of unsurpassed bravery, and with a forethought far beyond his years, Miller disarmed prejudice, and won confidence and affection by a singleness of mind, and devotion to the cause rarely to be met with in the native chiefs. They were blended, more or less, with the cabals of the period, from which he had studiously kept aloof. While they became partisans, he was the unfettered leader, and bent all the energies of his mind to render unqualified services for an indivisible purpose. The consequence was an appreciation of his character, motives, and achievements, which made him the idol of the army, and the chief in whom the people confided under the last emergency.

By a rare combination of tact and daring, he caused, with 80 men, the retreat of 2000 of his enemies, and thereby made a diversion, planned with nice calculation by himself, and executed with heroic coolness. He thus facilitated operations which would have been otherwise impracticable.

This singular stratagem he effected by sending scouts, around the country to light up numerous

fires, and to blow bugles in various directions. Thus the Spaniards were beguiled into the belief of the statement printed at Lima, and now circulated amongst the inhabitants, that Miller had arrived with a large liberating force to chase their enemies from the province. When the full consciousness of this daring device of Miller flashed upon the Spaniards, and they precipitately pushed forward to cut off his retreat, they found him their superior in celerity, and they reached the coast only to see a solitary vessel, and to learn that Miller had safely embarked his little band. He left them the dupes of an artifice hitherto unheard of in the evolutions of that country.

Miller returned to Lima, where he received the honours of a conqueror, and was regarded as a very rare specimen of military tact and manly bearing. His character for probity was no less conspicuous than his bravery and generalship; and when, at the termination of the war, the government sought the most trustworthy adherent to invest with the administration of Potosi, the source of rich mineral productions, Miller was the chosen functionary. He was ushered into the town by a procession headed by the municipality, and a general illumination signalled his arrival. It is also an honourable trait in Miller's character, that he won the confidence and

good will of his opponents. His kindness to Spanish prisoners awakened a grateful sentiment towards him in the minds of the Royalist chiefs, who would seize any favourable opportunity to send him delicacies from their table, or any other little acceptable present indicative of good feeling. One, indeed, made Miller the medium of forwarding *billets doux* to his lady love resident in Lima. He is now the British consul-general in the Sandwich Islands, and happily continues a living monument of what can be effected by principle, bravery, and discretion combined.

Such was the man with whom I passed that sleepless night after the retreat from Baltimore. The ensuing morning proved clear, and a very short march conducted us to North Point. There Admiral Malcolm was exhibiting his wonted activity in the embarkation of the troops, which was ultimately effected without further loss, and in the evening the whole force sailed from the Petapsco, but not without witnessing the reflection from Baltimore of an illumination of the city to celebrate its deliverance.

It blew a gale of wind when we left the Petapsco, and the stream was greatly troubled. It seemed to me to be an appropriate emblem of our agitated reflections under the twofold misfortune of the loss of our leader, and the wreck of anticipated conquest.

Again we cast anchor in the Potowmac, a river

which, by the wide extent of its estuary, and the depth of its water at its junction with the Chesapeake, denoted it a stream of gigantic pretensions. Its opposite banks, separate by some seven or eight miles, both of which I visited, were skirted with wild foliage; while inland, as far as we dare venture, there was a wildness indicative of very partial cultivation.

I was (indistrectly, I am now quite aware) roving with a few adventurous friends on the right bank, while our boat awaited our return, when we came upon a lone house, where, amidst a few people of white colour, sat some six or seven negroes, looking exceedingly sad and downcast. There must have been some unexplained cause for this remarkable dejection, but our sudden entry appeared to disturb a domestic arrangement, and all started up as we entered the apartment. Embarrassment, however, was soon dispelled by an American yeoman seizing a key and asking us politely if we "wished to see the chapel?"

We readily answered in the affirmative, having little dreamed of finding a chapel in the wilderness, and followed our conductor to a building about fifty yards from the house, where stood a structure resembling a barn, apparently devoid of windows, and bearing no outward appearance to a chapel. How-

ever, our guide opened huge folding wooden doors, threw back two or three closed shutters, and ushered us into a Roman Catholic chapel, well decorated, and possessing a gorgeous altar. We were amazed, and were still more surprised when our conductor informed us the congregation was wont to assemble from miles around, and was sometimes a crowded one. We presented the man with a few small silver pieces, for which he thanked us in gracious terms; and thence we made our way safely to the boat, and in due time to our ship.

CHAP. XII.

THE CHESAPEAKE ABANDONED. — THE TROPIC OF CANCER, AND
ACQUAINTANCE WITH NEPTUNE. — THE CEREMONY. — APPROACH
TO JAMAICA. — ARRIVAL AT NEGRIL. — TROPICAL SCENERY. —
RECEPTION BY THE PLANTERS. — THE SLAVES. — REINFORCE-
MENTS. — DEPARTURE FOR THE GULF OF MEXICO.

AT length Chesapeake Bay was abandoned, and the fleet sailed in a south-easterly direction, under sealed orders, not to be opened until a given latitude should be attained. In due time we approached the Tropic of Cancer, whereupon preparations were made on board the brig "Idas" (the transport in which I was now sailing) to initiate the uninitiated into the ceremony of an introduction to Neptune. Common conversation had forewarned us of the impending rite, and most of us expressed a willingness to pay the required forfeit (a specified contribution of rum, in money) rather than encounter the alternative. So many had, however, been admitted to the purchased exemption, that, amongst others, my offer was rejected.

The skipper, a frank, good-tempered seaman, had admonished us to prepare for rough usage, and, on his advice we, the rejected, had clothed ourselves in

the least valuable habiliments which our kit contained. On the 25th September we crossed the Tropic, and the scene that occurred was equally grotesque, and subversive [●] personal inviolability. We, the aliens of this latitude, were shut down below, and awaited with good-tempered dread each individual summons.

Listening with anxious curiosity, we heard hoarse questions and rejoinders which resolved themselves into the following exposition. A sailor, arrayed in harlequin costume, and accompanied by another dressed equally fantastically as "Neptune's Wife," shouted through a speaking trumpet "Ship a-hoy!" The captain, expecting the salutation, answered, "Aye, aye, sir!"

Neptune *loquitur*. "How are you, captain? You are an old friend of mine, but I think you have some hands on board who are strangers to me!" A mimic introduction to such as had previously crossed the line or tropics was succeeded by the summons to some novice from below to repair upon deck.

Between the main and mizen masts was placed a canoe (a casual prize from the Chesapeake) two thirds filled with water, amidship was placed a wooden roller, as a seat for each succeeding novice. The victim was lifted into the canoe by two sailors,

and being seated on the roller was thus admonished by Neptune:—"Never eat brown bread when you can get white! Never drink small beer when you can get strong! Never kiss the maid when you can kiss the missus, *unless* you prefer the maid!" Whereupon his chin was lathered with a compound of tar and grease, which was quickly scraped off by a piece of an iron hoop; and, so soon as the shaving had been thus perfected, the roller was suddenly withdrawn, and the unhappy wight floundered in the trough prepared for him.

Left to himself, he emerged with all practicable speed, but not yet to escape from further visitation. Each privileged friend of Neptune was close at hand with a bucket of water, and a thorough drenching was the concluding ceremony. Thus roughly admitted into tropical fraternity, he was free to aid in the forthcoming initiation. For myself, I can say, that having submitted with philosophical resignation to this uncouth ceremony, I lent a zealous hand in hastening the qualification of others, and fully enjoyed the boisterous fun of the moment.

After reflection has, however, impressed me with the outrage done to our boasted personal security. It is about as serious an inroad upon individual liberty as can well be contemplated, and is in fact a rude practical joke stretched to the utmost limit. It

passed, on board this vessel, without angry excitement to any but a Portuguese servant lad, who gnashed his teeth, and breathed impotent vows of vengeance.

Jamaica was now found to be our destination, and soon the towering mountains of St. Domingo summoned our attention from the ocean, of which we began to be heartily weary. Jamaica loomed in the distance, and, far beyond to our right, Cuba was indistinctly observable. We were pleased beyond measure at this triple outline of islands so celebrated, and restlessly speculated upon forthcoming events. Of course we conjectured that important home policy was about to be unravelled; but where, or how, we vainly endeavoured to conceive.

In the early part of November, 1814, however, we were safely riding at anchor in Negril Bay, a spacious harbour at the western extremity of this magnificent island, and all the glories of tropical scenery were thus unexpectedly open to our contemplation.

We quite forgot the reputed insalubrity of the island in the wonder and admiration which its beauty excited, and we seized the earliest opportunity to land, and to explore. Negril, by the way, does not possess all the enchantments of other spots in Jamaica (which as a whole is transcendently lovely),

but still there was that perfume and richness peculiar to the Tropics which so singularly impress every new comer.

There is perhaps a character in tropical landscape familiar, by pictorial delineation, to most inquiring people; but the English stranger who first gazes on the reality is struck with its marked distinctiveness. It so differs from all he has ever seen in Europe that, hopeful as he may have been of some development dimly preconceived, it is impossible to suppress his delight and interest in it.

First, there is by day that clear, pure, and unsullied atmosphere, terminating in a sky so deeply blue that no artificial colouring could possibly convey a conception of its brightness. Then the multiplied objects of beauty and interest which crowd upon the sight, absolutely ravish the senses of the novice.

Behold those cultivated plots of plantain and banana, waving with exquisite gracefulness, and so often sustaining on their symmetrical green branches, birds of jet-black plumage; the loftier, but no less decorative, cocoa-nut trees; the extensive fields of sugar-cane, which, viewed from a distance, impart so refreshing a verdure to the scenery; the fruitful lime trees, with their delicious odour; the rarer bambo, with its inexhaustible maze of tortuous branches;

the wild cotton-bush, with its ever-bursting buds; the endless prevalence of minuter flowerets, together with a casual profusion of the sensitive plant, shrinking with the slightest touch;—these, with many other strange indigenous products, all proclaimed, beyond dispute, our advent to a land of exotic combination.

Moreover, there existed striking animal contrasts to complete the transformation. Without referring to the catalogue of reptiles and insects with which the island abounded, there was the widest field for ornithological observation. But while we gazed with rapture upon every variety of plumage, and contemplated with delight the exquisite humming-birds, poising on the wing to suck sweets from numberless blossoms, with what aversion did we recoil from the revolting land-crabs, at times so poisonous and destructive!

Again, after dusk, all the poetry of our nature was awakened by the countless flights of the luminous and scintillating fire-flies. No words can describe the pleasing emotion with which I first beheld, in Jamaica, this beauteous phenomenon, enhanced as it was by accompanying circumstances. The air at that hour, though almost stifling, was surcharged with perfume, and journeying, as we did, through umbrageous lanes, and witnessing the everlasting

· flashes of these tiny insects, I experienced the full reality of another hemisphere.

Jamaica is now well known and has been largely visited, but it is divested of features then existent which could not, however, fail to leave an indelible impression. Slavery existed, distinction of colour formed a rigid rule, and the planters (notwithstanding the general complaint of colonial depression) appeared to be thriving, and lived luxuriously.

Enthusiastic loyalty pervaded the whole white population of Jamaica, whose practice it also was to extend unbounded hospitality to strangers. On this occasion the *éclat* of the capture of Washington, undimmed by the subsequent failure at Baltimore, awakened an excess of admiration which secured for its achievers the warmest reception everywhere. Adulatory compliments poured thickly upon them, the most cordial greetings, endless offers of services, and liberal feasting, marked their progress in the island; and happy was the man who had the prudence to partake, in moderation, of the general festivity.

The horses of the artillery, caught in America, and which had been deemed worthy of embarkation, were landed at Negril and turned out into pasture; and the artillery officers, as a relief from confined cribs on board ship, pitched a tent or two on the

crest of the first hill from the beach, mid-way between the sea and a large and thriving plantation. There we enjoyed a sort of temporary gipsy existence of a very agreeable nature.

My late friend, Captain Speer, however, sighed for some inland experience, and had no difficulty in enlisting me into that agreeable project. By an earnest suavity which rarely failed in its object, he prevailed upon the commanding officer, one of the most amiable of men (the present Colonel Mitchell) to allow us two, *i.e.* Speer and myself, to take each a horse; and, thus provided, we set forth on a circumscribed equestrian tour. We also took with us a mounted artillery driver to act as a servant; and the early hour of three o'clock A.M., one remarkable morning, saw us boated from a transport to the shore, through a fog at once dense, searching, discoloured, and fetid beyond any possible exaggeration. It differed only from a shower of sleet by its pestiferous odour.

Throughout that, to me, memorable excursion, I had but once occasion to draw my purse strings. We were actually upbraided if it became known that we had passed a country house or plantation residence without paying it a visit; and nothing more was required to ensure breakfast, dinner, or supper, or all of them, together with accommodation for the

night, and the addition of ample provender for our animals, than to ride up, and inform the planter politely that we had made ourselves his visitors. No welcome could be more hearty, nor hospitality be more profuse.

We journeyed escorted by cavalcades of friendly attendants. A slave would be despatched to notify our approach towards some selected estate; and when arrived there, the same demonstration of welcome and liberal entertainment would recur. It is, in short, impossible to exaggerate the extent of generous urbanity which at that epoch distinguished the gentry of Jamaica.

The country was gloriously florescent. Verdure and richness refreshed the eye at every opening vista. Bold acclivities, clothed with the exuberant foliage of the Antilles, lent a graceful contrast to the valleys and plains, teeming with fruitful loveliness; while remarkably broad and babbling rivulets, gracefully foaming and serpentining, reminded us of the devious trout-streams of England.

Still, amidst all this ravishing fertility, there was a feature in the tableau equally pernicious and revolting. The humble subsidiary agents in this field of lavish productiveness performed their daily tasks under the supervision of a "bookkeeper," or subordinate functionary of the estate, who was armed with

a cartwhip. A close inspection of the black labourers disclosed scars and cicatrices, the results of inhuman usage; and amidst the comfort, hospitality, and profusion that abounded, the heart was moved to pity by the condition of the slaves. Their huts were cleanly and comfortable; their little patches of ground were generally well cultivated, and their physical wants appeared to be well supplied. Their moral condition was, however, frightful. They were, in fact, mere beasts of burden, and led a life of comfort or torture according to the temper or caprice of their owners. I am bound, in justice, to avow that their general outward treatment appeared to be good; but one damning fact attested the fearful blight of slavery; viz., the universal prostitution of the females from the earliest age.

Marriage appeared to be an institution, as regarded the slaves, utterly unthought of. The consequent degradation of the black and coloured women was flagrantly notorious and unheeded. Girls of ten and eleven years of age walked abroad utterly divested of clothing of any kind; and even the adult women of the labouring class wore simply a chemise, with the addition, in some few instances, of a short petticoat.

We journeyed from Negril to Savannah la Mar;

thence to Montego Bay, diverging right and left from the direct route as special invitations attracted us. We returned to Negril by St. Lucia and Green Island, the scorching sun being neutralised by the all-refreshing diurnal breeze, which proves so kindly a relief in these latitudes.

We stayed one night and the greater part of the next day at an estate called "Burnt Ground," a spot distinguished by surpassing beauty, and adorned by the presence, and the civilising influence of the only English lady we had met with as a resident. She was pretty, well educated, and of elegant demeanour; but, in deploring her want of society, this lady openly averred that the all-pervading licentiousness of the country was a bar to the residence of English gentlewomen.

We returned to Negril. The sea was alternately calm and ruffled by that providential daily gale (it may be called) which, first gently rippling the surface, gradually extended to a ten-knot breeze, blowing with persevering activity from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. A few days rolled on, and at length huge ships approached, bearing reinforcements from Europe. Again the flag of Sir Alexander Cochrane announced his renewed assumption of the naval command. Major-General Keane came out as the military com-

mander, and his name appeared to be welcome to the whole force. At length, within one week of December, the sun still exercising its untiring influence, we sailed from Negril Bay, and a powerful fleet, with full 5000 troops, bore away for the Gulf of Mexico.

CHAP. XIII.

THE GRAND CAYMAN. — THE GULF OF MEXICO. — CHANGE OF CLIMATE. — WILD FOWL. — AN ESCAPE FROM SHIPWRECK. — LAKE BORGNE. — AN ACTION. — CHARACTER OF THE LAKE. — AN ISLAND RENDEZVOUS. — THE FORCE ON LAND.

OUR destination had transpired, and the capture of New Orleans was now universally believed to be the object of the expedition. A numerous fleet, composed of vessels of war of all imaginable dimensions, with numerous transports, floated majestically upon the Caribbean Sea, which we breasted with all the pride of confident superiority. The “Tonnant” bore the flag of Sir Alexander Cochrane, and the “Royal Oak” that of Rear-Admiral Malcolm. We soon beheld the Grand Cayman, which, although of lofty sound, proved a mere low, flat, uninfluential spot, devoted to the capture and sale of turtle. There the whole, I verily believe, of the fleet succeeded in obtaining some quantity of this delicious food, but we, *par excellence*, obtained a prize to us thereafter of priceless value.

Our friend Speer caught sight of a seine, or huge fishing-net, in the boat of a turtle vendor, and with

the active eye of a sportsman, eager for game of whatever kind, bargained for its possession. He bought it for fifteen dollars, and to our surprise came back elate with his purchase. He anticipated a future haul or two, but he then little expected the invaluable acquisition it would ultimately prove to us.

We pursued our grateful course over these genial waters, and in due time rounded Cape San Antonio, the western extremity of Cuba, and there we formed our first acquaintance with the Gulf of Mexico. At first all was mild and unruffled, but we had not proceeded far before terrific thunder-storms told us the real history of these occasional, nay frequent, visitations.

It is said to be a characteristic quality of this gulf to be at once placid and as instantaneously convulsed. In proof of this truthful description, it came to our knowledge that two gentlemen of the Paymaster-General's department (on board a transport, one of our companions) had descended, for more perfect enjoyment, into a jolly-boat, which the skipper had left floating astern, to smoke their cigars, when one of those semi-hurricanes suddenly engulfed the boat, and they, poor fellows, were lost.

We shortly made the American main, off Pen-

sacola, and there, first, rain or sleet, and then a freezing wind, made us painfully conscious of our transition from the glowing atmosphere of Jamaica to one, at this season, of piercing severity. We followed in the track of the admiral, and soon were navigating amongst the Chandeleur Islands—low, dismal, swampy, and apparently uninhabited. Water fowl of every description not only abounded, but exceeded the most liberal credulity. Here we contemplated with astonishment the inexhaustible flights of wild geese, so dense and countless that the imagination might strive in vain to estimate the length, density, or numbers of the flock. Ducks of every distinctive degree, and pelicans (those unerring fishermen) seemed, notwithstanding their astounding numbers, to revel in exhaustless plenty.

I was at this time in the brig "Idas" (where I had formed my rough friendship with Neptune), and can hardly account for the comparative dispersion of the fleet. We were all of us sailing under competent nautical guidance, but some how or other we got wonderfully separated.

Under these circumstances, during the night of the 11th December, the wind moderate, the sea unruffled, and the moon tinging the surface of the waters with her brightest light, the captain moreover on deck, and nothing appearing to indicate

danger, our vessel went suddenly, with a convulsive bound, upon a sand-bank. She heaved for a minute or two with the rolling sea, but with each recurring shock became more deeply imbedded. I was asleep in my crib, but was forthwith awoke, as were others, by this alarming intelligence.

We all promptly arose, and ascending to the deck beheld a scene as peaceful as picturesque. Although in that wintry month, all was as calm and beautiful as on a summer's night. No sooner had the catastrophe occurred than the captain's eye discerned ahead a very small, sandy island, with a perfectly flat surface, and beyond it an expanse of water glistening with moonbeams.

No time was lost in doing all that an expert seaman could do under such a calamity, but in vain. The brig was firm as a rock, and was not to be moved. She was heavily laden with ordnance stores, and as day dawned the long-boat was soon afloat, and the ship was lightened as far as every available contrivance would allow, but still without effect. We saw vessels far in the offing, but neither the guns of distress we fired incessantly, nor the flag indicative of it, could avail to attract assistance. All that day and the following night were spent in the same vain effort, the weather meanwhile, providentially, continuing as calm as when we first struck.

Thus we remained until the afternoon of the 13th, when happily the "Etna" bomb, Captain Gardiner, became aware of our extremity, and sailed down to our rescue. He first cast anchor at a safe distance, and then employed his whole crew to lighten the brig, which having sufficiently effected, he resorted to nautical expedients to dislodge her from her bed in the sand, and towards dusk he succeeded in anchoring her in deep water, not far from his own ship. Our cargo was replaced, and the "Etna" and "Idas" passed the night in close proximity at this unwonted anchorage.

But what a night! The wind howled, the sea was agitated, and we all saw what must have been, but for the "Etna's" timely aid, the fate of the stranded vessel. For our own lives we had no immediate fear. The sandy island would have saved us; but, even under that contingency, what might have been our ultimate fate it was impossible to conjecture, so lone and unfrequented was the spot. Captain Gardiner (a man who had fought at Trafalgar) received our warmest thanks with blunt complacency, and jocosely bidding us keep henceforth a better look-out, left us to rejoin the fleet. This we did in a very short time, when the whole magnificent force anchored at the entrance of Lake Borgne, or, as it was familiarly called, the Blind Lake.

The projected point of landing before New Orleans was at least 100 miles from the entrance to Lake Borgne, where we were now anchored. The lake was shallow and the passage treacherous; consequently our gigantic fleet, consisting of ponderous ships, was little calculated to float upon that shoal but muddy stream, for such it unquestionably was.

The foresight of our commanders was now observable. Various small vessels, hired at Jamaica, of inconsiderable draught of water, appeared ready to act as transports in shallow navigation; and no time was lost in freighting them with their living cargoes, together with all the accompaniments necessary to human sustentation, and with the numerous munitions for warlike purposes. All the boats of the fleet, moreover, were hoisted out and afloat, and the most active preparations were made to carry out an extraordinary enterprise.

Before, however, consigning to Lake Borgne the numerous flotilla, so variously freighted, we had to dispute the inlet with an enemy. The lake had been guarded, principally against smugglers, by a small flotilla of craft suited to its intricate navigation, and it became a bombastic point of honour not to allow our Herculean force to proceed without a demonstration to impede us, at any cost, comparatively with the force, of human life. A fight con-

sequently became inevitable. When I say that the odds were so formidable as to leave the Americans not the remotest chance of success, I at once proclaim the Quixotic character of this opposition, and the reckless nature of the contest. Still, as the enemy insisted upon this useless demonstration, their overthrow became inevitable.

For the season of the year the day was clear, and from the masthead of our vessel we looked forth upon the unequal combat. A host of well-armed craft pressed upon the puny but resolute force opposed to them (five or six in number), and after a delay suited to the circumstances, boat after boat was assailed and captured, and although some few of the combatants were killed, and many wounded, there never could have been for an instant a doubt of the result. I have always regarded this affair as a wanton sacrifice of human life, merely to maintain the idle boast of bulldog pertinacity.

This flotilla captured, and all impediments to further progress removed, the small craft and boats crowded the lake, and pressed forward to an island midway from the fleet, variously named. "Swamp Island" seemed to be the prevailing designation, but I should conjecture that it had heretofore been nameless.

My friend, Captain Deacon, who was appointed

to command a "brigade" of three-pounders, had solicited from the commanding officer that I might be attached to his brigade. This being conceded, I found myself transferred from the "Idas" to a small sloop, and a raft having been well constructed, we mounted the guns upon their carriages with a proportionate equipment of limbers, and the sloop, whose deck was thronged with a detachment from the 93rd regiment, besides artillerymen, took this picturesque raft in tow, and we progressed, without any serious mishap, to Swamp Island.

The weather was alternately foggy, drizzly, and frosty, but when we approached this island the frost became intense, and was the cause of extreme suffering to all, but especially to the men of two black regiments, who here found a most ungenial change from the vertical sun of Jamaica.

Our force now consisted of what remained, after the operations in the Chesapeake, of the 4th, 21st, 44th, and 85th regiments; but this force had been augmented by the 93rd Highland regiment, part of the 95th Rifles, two West India regiments, a detachment of the 14th Light Dragoons, and a fourth company of Artillery, under Major Munro, who assumed the command of that arm, and a small detachment of Sappers and Miners. Other reinforcements were said to be on their way from England,

and as the whole force seemed fully to confide in Major-General Keane, nothing short of success was anticipated.

In this passage of Lake Borgne disasters were innumerable. There was no end of grounding, struggling, and suffering. The coast of Florida was distinctly seen on our right, clothed with its all-prevailing pine forests. Islands, chiefly uninhabited, the mere abodes of alligators, bounded our left, but the discoloured lake was wide and shoal, and in many parts would scarcely float a pinnacle.

The wind, now temperate and anon boisterous, sorely tried our boats. The men of the navy toiled patiently. With them all was labour without excitement such as sailors covet; but it became a duty, and was most zealously performed. By the way, my friend and colleague, Lieutenant Tracey, of Tothill Fields, was, although then unknown to me, on that service as a midshipman of the "Royal Oak," bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Malcolm.

On arriving at Swamp Island we there found General Keane and the first draft of troops disembarked from the boats, which hastened back to the fleet for other troops, and thus, by degrees, the whole force was at length transported to the required point.

At Swamp Island we dismantled our three-pounder

brigade, since the raft could no longer continue to be, as heretofore, towed; and stowing the disjointed fragments in the boats, we left, on the afternoon of the 22nd, that miserable island to the undisturbed possession of countless flocks of pigeons. The day was calm, but a small, cold rain falling greatly marred our comfort; still the boats, connected by their painters one to the other, were rowed in three or four separate divisions, with ensigns floating and bands playing. The whole scene, pretty and effective, was somewhat dimmed by the weather, otherwise it assumed the aspect of a regatta. As we were far distant from any spot occupied by the enemy, the bands might have indulged in their loudest strains without fear of reaching a hostile ear, and thus awakening suspicion.

The sailors toiled throughout a night of biting frost, which had succeeded the sleet; and we, whose only resource was to sit patiently still in earnest expectancy, suffered much from cold.

As day dawned we found ourselves diverging from the lake, at a post, retained throughout these operations, called "The Fisherman's Huts," a name sufficiently indicative of the locality. Here we entered a creek of gradually contracting width, bounded by swamps overrun with tall withered reeds, thick as willow plantations in England, and from eight to

twelve feet in height. Oars were muffled, silence was enjoined, and we progressed for some miles, until one boat only could proceed at a time, and we gained the landing point by passing over a floating bridge formed of the boats which had preceded us.

We jumped ashore on to a low muddy landing, which, gradually widening and becoming firmer, led us by the side of a ditch irregularly connecting this creek with the Mississippi. The river was a short mile from the creek, and rolled on with turbid celerity; but before we reached its banks, the country expanded to the right, and looked cultivable and pleasant. It was at this moment covered with snow, and every intersecting brook was completely frozen over; but the open space was studded with barns and farm residences, with some few houses of better pretensions. The stores were plentifully filled with sugar in hogsheads, and dried sugar-cane abounded. Indeed, at length, sugar lay scattered like sand over the length and breadth of the camp.

Our eyes were gladdened by two trees standing outside a negro hamlet, loaded with oranges of very deep colour. They proved to be Seville oranges; and there they remained, very sparingly assailed, throughout our sojourn.

CHAP. XIV.

NEW ORLEANS. — POSITION. — ATTACK, AND ITS REPULSE. — A
 SCHOONER DESTROYED. — A RECONNOITRING PARTY. — LIEU-
 TENANT-COLONEL DICKSON, R. A. — A FURIOUS CANNONADE, AND
 ITS RESULTS. — THE CAUSES.

I DESIRE to relate, irrespective of the details of others, my own personal experience of this enterprise, and to offer a few reflections upon its issue. It was one attended by excessive hardship, and caused present suffering to thousands, and after prostration to hundreds by laying the foundation for future diseases. It proved, indeed, a most severe service, and stands a monument of human endurance.

But what were the circumstances which made this brief campaign so critical, and, considering the former hard endurance of British troops, so all-depressing? I sometimes cast a retrospective glance upon its incidents, and as often wonder at the strange result. It has always appeared to me to have been an expedition signally ill-omened.

In the first place, I believe that our naval commander, Sir Alexander Cochrane (then an aged man, with silvery locks), was wanting in the neces-

sary enterprise and zeal to secure the most effective intelligence. Certain it is that we landed on an unpropitious spot, at an inclement season of the year, without a particle of camp equipage, or the means to secure the shelter and health of the troops.

Secondly, our position presented a base unsuited to aught but the most unfavourable tactics.

And thirdly, such was the lamentable want of the commonest information as to the nature of the locality, and the defensive condition of the city, that although the latter was without defenders, and at the mercy of the invaders, General Keane halted half way to wait for reinforcements, without having seen an enemy; when, by adventurously pushing his reconnoissance up to the outskirt of the town, he would have found it defenceless, and have possessed himself of it unopposed. This was a fatal error, which enabled the Americans to interpose an insuperable barrier to our after advance. Again, in the progress of the operations, our ill fortune (and there is undoubtedly fortune in war) allotted to a cowardly, or at least unwilling officer, a duty upon which the whole success of the design at that time hinged.

But, not to anticipate, we landed, as I have said, and occupied a position flat and open, the town of New Orleans being before us, with the broad Mississippi on our immediate left, and an impenetrable

marsh at an angle of our right. The space between the river and the marsh was little more than a mile. The opposite side of the river was lined with batteries, which poured an effective fire into our left flank. In short, no part of our camp could be said to be without the range of the enemy's guns; and, for upwards of a fortnight, at no hour of the day or night could we repose in security.

We landed on the 23rd Dec., 1814, with a force under 2000 men; and we reposed, or affected to do so, until the boats could try back, and bring up the residue of our force. The weather was severely frosty, and snow covered the whole surface of our camp. We were consequently too glad to light camp fires, and to court the benefit of their warmth. The three-pounder brigade of guns was divided, and the division to which I was attached occupied a post not far distant from the Mississippi, and was considerably to the left of the main body.

Evening closed in with unusual darkness; nay, we could not discern an object at a distance of fifty feet. Consequently, no operation on the river could be at all discernible, and therein consisted the safety of the enemy's movements; and he stealthily availed himself of this advantage. At the moment of his first hostile demonstration I was standing with my back to the fire, in earnest conversation with Captain

Deacon, who was at that moment contrasting with our situation the universal activity for Christmas festivities in England. He had got to this interesting point, when a sudden glare illumined our darkness, and there burst forth a thunder from the river that startled the whole camp, and told a tale of well-intended devastation, which summoned the whole force to arms.

We found this tremendous fire to proceed from two vessels of war—a sloop of war and an armed schooner—abreast of our encampment; and, at the same moment, a sharp rattle of musketry assailed our right, from the margin of the marsh. Thus were we assaulted on both flanks, while a force in our front essayed to give effect to this twofold surprise.

Amidst the darkness, and the suddenness of this attack, a hasty rush to arms, and such prompt dispositions as were practicable, hurriedly ensued. The result was the repulse of the enemy, with the capture of at least 300 prisoners. The American plan had been well conceived, but was, from the raw character of the troops, badly executed; and, beside the momentary panic which such a demonstration could not fail to create, the movement only made the British, in its result, thereafter more vigilant. It was generally reported, and credited, that when we landed before New Orleans the town was unoccupied and

incapable of defence ; but our halt, half way, enabled General Jackson to come up ; and his prompt sagacity suggested the well-planned attempt upon our camp.

The vessels in the river were, as I have noted, a sloop of war and an armed schooner, which had stealthily dropped down with the stream to astound us by a terrible and unlooked-for explosion. There they lay, pouring in their fire, throughout the next day and night, and greatly harassing our position. But it was not designed that they should thus scathelessly molest us. Reinforcements had arrived from England, and with them Colonel Dickson of the Royal Artillery, who had commanded that arm almost throughout the Peninsular war. He lost no time in directing the structure of a battery, cloaked from the enemy's observation by a mound separating the river from a road which ran parallel to it. From this point shells and red-hot shot were poured so thickly into the devoted schooner, that at length she exploded, with fine melodramatic effect.

The sloop, observing the fate of her companion, strained every nerve to warp up against the stream ; and although a few shells, well directed, burst over her, she succeeded in creeping out of danger, thereby ridding us of her destructive fire.

It was generally surmised that had we desisted

from firing upon the schooner (already more than sufficiently ignited), and had earlier turned our attention to the sloop, she too might have been consigned to destruction.

Pending this introductory assailment, boat after boat brought up the troops deposited at Swamp Island, until at length our whole force was mustered in front of New Orleans. There is usually procrastination in warlike preparations, and in this instance our advanced picquets were thrown out, and we awaited the next movement to be determined by the General, who proved to be the appointed commander of this undertaking, Lieut.-General Sir Edward Packenham, brother-in-law to the Duke of Wellington.

Some days devoted to indispensable arrangement enabled an active enemy to survey the ground, and to occupy every disputable inch. The plan of defence was of easy practicability to a mind of ordinary conception, and its adoption appeared to be prompt and vigorous.

The circumstances of the two armies were of remarkable contrast. General Jackson found, in New Orleans, stores filled with bales of cotton, while we discovered barns and outhouses stored with hogsheads of sugar. The appliances of the city disclosed solid advantages to its defenders, while the flat, soft,

mouldy space in our possession, and the 'frail yield of its surface, offered to us materials of the least enduring character.

A broad, impenetrable barrier of cotton bales, protected by an artificial ditch, of good pretensions, interposed to protect them; while we hastily constructed batteries, formed principally of casks of sugar, rolled out from their storehouses for an unlooked-for consignment. This novel fortification was strengthened by filling up the interstices with sand-bags, charged with the alluvial deposit, which, by artificial embankment, had acquired consistency. The superficies of our position was pure mould, and it would have excited astonishment to have found the smallest stony substance. Consequently, our batteries presented a most unequal contrast to the stern, unyielding character of well-packed cotton; but still, after a reconnoissance which disclosed serried breastworks, the formation of our works proceeded.

The weather continued frosty for many days, and although the nights were most severe, the days were fine and bracing.

During this interval, the enemy would send out reconnoitring parties. Upon one of these occasions a picquet of the 95th occupied a post in the vicinity of some bushes. I was walking to and fro, in conversation with some friends, when a distant glitter-

ing of bayonets attracted our attention. We strained our eyes to ascertain the nature of the movement, and perceived a very considerable body of infantry in motion, when, suddenly, a few horsemen came at full gallop towards our lines. A mounted staff officer happening to ride by, he joined us in conjecture and comment; and, seeing these select horsemen still progressing towards our front, he exclaimed, "I hope the picquet of the 95th may see them!" when suddenly, a few rifles banged from behind the bushes, and with such unerring aim, that three riders were forthwith prostrate, and their excited horses came dashing into our camp. I made a vain effort to catch hold of the rein of one, but my indomitable friend Speer was more successful. He caught a fine horse, well caparisoned, and he secured a good saddle and bridle, a pair of holsters furnished with pistols, and brought this welcome booty to England, after the services they rendered him during the ensuing brief campaign.

In the meantime I had received a special introduction to Lieut.-Colonel Dickson, R. A., whose distinguished services in the Peninsula had clothed him with the universal respect and admiration of the army. He was one of the many in whom the great Duke had discerned those latent talents which he possessed the instinctive power to call forth,

As a simple captain, Dickson had been seen and appreciated by his renowned commander, who discarded seniors, in order, through a junction with the Portuguese Artillery, to elevate him into the supreme direction of that arm. Not only did the Duke succeed, but so indubitably correct was his choice esteemed to be, that many officers, Dickson's seniors, subscribed willingly to the Duke's judgment, and remained in the Peninsula to serve under a junior thus artificially exalted. Dickson was a man of remarkable ability, infirm in temper, but essentially, in the end, just and generous. There were few men more capable to lead an army, for he was of quick discernment, cool, fearless, and enduring.

Although, as I have said, he sometimes displayed a hasty temper, and would render it unmistakeably manifest, in a moment, should a service be exacted from him, he would melt into smiles and complacency, and be eager to extend assistance. The late Major Harry Lane (a man at that period well known in the regiment of artillery) quaintly illustrated the character of Colonel Dickson, when he declared jocosely, in the plenitude of his esteem, "I know the dear old fellow's heart so well, that, although I would resent to the utmost another's temper, if Dickson were to spit in my face and kick me, I would pull off my hat and thank him for it." This was doubt-

less, a humorous extravagance on the part of the speaker ; but it tended powerfully to show how deep was his regard for that gifted man.

The warm friendship expressed for me by Deacon and Speer, induced the Colonel to send for me, and in the most kindly terms he communicated the welcome intelligence that he designed to attach me to his own staff; and throughout that service I remained so attached. It proved to be little beyond a distinctive mark of favour ; but I appreciated it, notwithstanding.

Arrangements progressed, and the 1st of January, 1815, was ushered in by an explosion of rockets that shook the whole British front, and produced a startling effect.

Cannon boomed, shot whistled, shells burst over an apparently devoted enemy ; and the fire being promptly returned, thunder, and smoke, and slaughter became the order of the day. The relative strength of the opposing batteries soon became apparent ; and, at length, about one in the afternoon, it was discovered that our batteries were untenable, and those of the Americans intact.

Before, however, this undesirable consummation, word was brought to the reserve that the batteries were without portfires. I was consequently despatched to the 18-pounder battery, on the extreme

right of our position, at 750 yards' distance from the enemy, to ascertain the fact, and with certain orders to supply the deficiency, if needed. At that time the cannonade was at its hottest, and the ground behind our batteries was ploughed up by the enemy's fire. Unconscious of the real danger of my course, I strode on; when a loud voice, which proved to be that of Major-General Gibbs (who, with his staff, was standing to watch the progress of events, and who, eight days afterwards, was killed), warned me of my danger. "Where are you going, sir?" "I am going to the battery, in front," I replied. "You'll be shot, to a certainty, if you continue in that direction," cried the veteran. "Creep under this hedge to your right, and take care of yourself."

I thankfully obeyed the injunction, and, at length, amidst a hot fire, reached the battery. The shot peppered about it thickly; and, at that particular moment, Colonel Dickson was up a tree, which our semicircular work enclosed, looking through his telescope at the enemy's proceedings. There I stood, patiently waiting his descent, and, at length fully conscious of my unenviable position, I fervently desired to end my mission. I can never forget the cool imperturbation of that remarkable man, who was, as I have said, a soldier of the highest merit. He stood, with his telescope under his arm, and

talked to me with an indifference of danger which denoted the practised warrior.

The battery being now found to be untenable, its fire began to slacken; and the Americans, elated by our manifest impuissance in this respect, uttered a wild shout, and an armed body rushed out with the apparent intention to charge our guns. This occurred before my colloquy with Colonel Dickson had closed, and this sudden excitement produced a finale to it. The British batteries, however, had not been left unprotected; for a numerous body of the 4th regiment was reclining on the ground, prepared for any active emergency. No sooner, therefore, did this wild scurry ensue than up jumped the protective force, and a sharp volley drove the enemy back into his entrenchments. It was a fine illustration of the tactics of Rhoderick Dhu, and filled my mind with exultation.

CHAP. XV.

A VISIT TO THE SLAIN.—PUSILLANIMITY IN ACTION—REFLECTIONS THEREUPON.—NEW PLAN OF OPERATIONS—THEIR NATURE.—THE WEATHER.—A HUMOROUS INCIDENT.—A VISIT TO THE FLEET.—OCCURRENCES AND RETURN.—BOATS ON THE MISSISSIPPI—THEIR DESIGN.—ASSAULT ON THE AMERICAN LINES.—COWARDICE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.—DEATH OF SIR EDWARD PACKENHAM.—LOSS ON BOTH SIDES.

WENDING my way back from the battery, I met an old shipmate of Captain Crawford's company, Serjeant Porter. He was a man advanced in years; and was so lauded as a first-rate non-commissioned officer, that it used to be jocosely remarked that "Crawford did not think small beer of Porter." The poor old fellow was exhausted by fatigue, and groaned piteously. He was bespattered with mud, and his whole appearance betokened rough usage. We discussed the incidents of the day, and from him I learned how many of our late sea companions had fallen.

Amongst others, I heard with deep concern the death of Lieutenant R., with whom I had been so long embarked; and a small wooden building was pointed out to me as the depository of his body. Relieved from any further care concerning the port-

fires, I hastened to that miserable hut, and there lay the outstretched corpse of poor R. He had been shockingly mutilated, but his features still retained their well-known expression. At the foot of his deceased master sat his servant, Gunner John Walker, who, burying his face in his handkerchief, wept over those earthly remains. It was a moving spectacle, and deeply impressed me with the unyielding strength of the good fellow's fidelity.

The history of poor R. was as novel as afflicting. He had not possessed the constitutional temperament indispensable for a soldier, and at the outset of active operations had simulated illness. The weak imposture had been detected, and the rumours to his discredit awakened the solicitude of my gallant friend Speer, who with blunt energy warned R. of the disgraceful fate that must await him, unless he should arouse himself from that fatal lethargy.

Thus incited, R. urged his claim to be sent forward, instead of remaining behind with the reserve; and he was accordingly serving in a battery within short range of the enemy, when terror so completely paralysed his faculties, that he retreated from the guns, and vowed to resign his commission. On the urgent remonstrance, however, of his Captain in the battery, he once more approached his proper post, only to be

fearfully shattered by a cannon-ball, and hurried into eternity.

That unfortunate young man was of a family distinguished for bravery. His father was at that time a Post Captain in the Royal Navy; and his brother, a Major in the Royal Artillery, had been noted in the Peninsula as the bravest of the brave, and was subsequently killed at Waterloo.

Lieutenant R., poor fellow! had been, it was affirmed, the spoilt child of his mother, and was weak and effeminate. When brought into actual conflict, his nerve failed him, and he had crouched under a weight of alarm which he could neither master nor dissemble. He fell before he could, by an after assumption of fortitude, expunge the stain of his first pusillanimity, and I saw him a corpse frightfully mutilated.

Such an example, rare and deplorable as it is, is not without its uses; nor is it historically fair to suppress an incident which was so widely known, and universally canvassed.

Those who aspire to bear arms, should reflect earnestly upon a soldier's requirements, and test the stuff of which they are composed, ere they seek to gratify vanity by the mere assumption of a splendid costume.

John Walker, the devoted servant of poor R., was thenceforth noted as a paragon of fidelity, and was taken into the service of Captain Crawford. He

remained in it until the period arrived which authorised his discharge with a pension, when he retired into Scotland his native country.

The impenetrable nature of the American lines had now become apparent, and other tactics became indispensable.

I have before mentioned a shallow ditch connecting the creek by which we had advanced, with the Mississippi. It was next determined so to enlarge this communication, as to allow the launches of men-of-war, to be thence floated into the river. This was a work of no small difficulty, and caused upwards of a week's delay.

Meanwhile, Colonel Dickson despatched me to the fleet, with certain orders for the renewal of our equipments. I received but a momentary notice of this mission, was hastily introduced to a naval commander, and entering a man-of-war's barge in the creek, set off in the commander's company on a long watery excursion at this most ungenial season.

I may here remark, that the frost which first greeted our landing, had suddenly broken up, and had been succeeded by the most stormy weather. Furious hurricanes howled continuously, accompanied by heavy rains, until the camp before New Orleans had become a swamp; and with this change our condition had really assumed an appalling aspect. What I

suffered from cold, drenching, and the impossibility of finding a dry or sheltered resting-place at night, no pen can describe. I have been irremediably wet for days together, without a change of any kind, or the possibility of securing the slightest assuagement.

In the midst of our suffering and distress we were yet highly amused by a most comical incident. The frost, as I have said, had been intense; and as we reposed most generally, with the canopy of heaven for our roof, no chance of protection from the external atmosphere was by any one disregarded. One of our companions (the late Major Carmichael, R. A.), a blunt, honest, excellent Highlander, had found, near to the position of his 9-pounder brigade, a drain of good dimensions, and had caused his men so to scoop out and enlarge it, as to fashion it into a very snug retreat during the night. He had retired to rest, as usual, when a sudden thaw, and a simultaneous fall of rain, sent the unchained fluids to seek their natural outlet. Poor Carmichael was disturbed by such an unwelcome torrent, that to rise, to flounder, and to emerge, demanded the promptest exertion, and he came out saturated. The incident excited universal mirth, and often afterwards did his broad and honest features distend into a grin, when he was reminded of his unpleasant dilemma in the drain.

I quitted the creek with my naval companion, bound for the fleet, with a good hundred miles of water to be ploughed in an open boat. In Lake Borgne the currents were strong and baffling; and at length our wearied crew, who had tugged all night at their oars, became exhausted and dispirited. We had started at three o'clock, P.M., and two of the afternoon of the succeeding day saw us still striving with the currents. The "Anaconda" brig-of-war, lightest of draught, and which had advanced further up the lake than any other vessel of war, lay at anchor apparently within easy access; but the exhaustion of our boat's crew, and the strongly opposing currents, mocked all exertion, and Tantalus appeared to be outdone. "Pull away, my lads," cried the encouraging commander; "a few strokes more and we shall reach her." A momentary rally, and the renewed exercise of slackening sinews answered to this considerate encouragement; and at length, but not without a deperate effort, we reached the "Anaconda," and received a cordial welcome from Captain Dashwood, who had temporarily quitted his ship, the "Norge" (the flag ship), for some useful service in this more advanced position. Our men got some rest and ample refreshment, while the gallant commander and myself sat down to what appeared to

me (after my recent privation) to be a sumptuous banquet.

In due time we were again on the dreary lake; and after a hard tug I was consigned for the night to the "Gordon" troop-ship, a sixty-four gun ship *armé en flûte*, and the commander went elsewhere to fulfil his own mission.

In the gun-room of the "Gorgon" I was received with true nautical hospitality, and entered discursively into all the details of our operations before New Orleans, without taking heed of sundry gesticulations of the British part of my audience. I saw two individuals in plain clothes, but did not for a moment conjecture that their presence need impose caution upon me. At length, an officer of the ship beckoned me out, and warned me against unlimited comment upon our warlike proceedings. I then learned that the two men, attired *en bourgeois*, were Americans; that they had come with a flag of truce upon an unimportant errand to the Admiral, who had told them that the time of their visit was so inopportune, and their message so vague, that he should detain them in the fleet until the consummation of plans which it was conjectured they had come to scrutinise.

I was shocked to think that I should inadvertently have made mischievous disclosures to an enemy, and sought an interview with Captain Bowden who com-

manded the "Gorgon," to apologise for my indiscretion. He, however, thought little of the incident ; and quite relieved my mind, by assuring me no harm could possibly result from my loquacity.

The following morning I took leave of my entertainers, who furnished me with a boat to reach the "Anne" transport, containing the Ordnance equipments, and to which consequently I was specially bound.

On board that transport we had left the women of Captain Crawford's company, whose apprehensions for the fate of their husbands had been painfully excited. Miscellaneous rumours had reached them of the fate of the army, but not a word could they glean of their own dear company. When, therefore, I appeared on board, they regarded me as a heavenly messenger sent to relieve their anxious hearts, and they crowded around me with almost breathless solicitude. Providentially I could speak comfort to them all. Their husbands were yet safe. The scene was one of touching interest, and moved me almost to tears.

So soon as I had quieted their individual alarms, I proceeded to enumerate the general casualties ; and as I named one after the other who had already fallen, the frantic ejaculations, tears, and moans of these deserted creatures, became agonising. "Poor

Mr. R. is killed," said I. A loud wail of lamentation, succeeded by sobs, arrested my narrative. "Serjeant M'Donald is killed, so is Gunner Doherty, so is Drummer Morton;" but it was in vain to attempt to proceed with this dark catalogue, for the poor women's grief became at every fresh name so uncontrollable, that no spectacle could be more severely distressing. I was glad to despatch the business that brought me to the ship; and after thanks and fervent blessings, I left them to brood over the mournful intelligence I had brought them, and to await with perturbation the possible news of future disasters.

The boats of the fleet were scouring the lake to render every required service, and the navy were thus destined to perform a duty at once dull, uninspiring, and laborious. It was only necessary to inform the midshipman or mate in command of a boat, that yours was an errand of exigency, and he forthwith extended his willing aid. Thus I returned to the creek, and thence to the position before New Orleans, and reported the results of my commission to the commanding officer, who thanked me in gracious terms for my attention and celerity.

On an occasion, years afterwards, I sought the testimonial (for a special purpose) of Colonel Dickson, and my zeal on "detached duty" was gracefully

remembered. The fact undoubtedly is, that these apparently subordinate details involve, in their development, no inconsiderable share of eventual success or failure.

When I returned to the camp I found active "fatigue parties" working with incessant toil to widen the brook, or rather ditch, which, rugged and shallow, connected the great river with the creek. Then it was we saw and intensely pitied the unfortunate black regiments. The weather was alternately stormy and frosty, little suited to their livelong service in a burning climate: and now, wading through mud and half-frozen water, they were required to act the part of "excavators." Poor wretches! they worked awkwardly and groaned incessantly, under an occupation which inflicted deadly suffering, and sent numbers to the hospital, and most likely to their graves.

However, at length the channel was reported practicable; and then occurred such a hauling of launches and barges, and such ceaseless efforts to drag them through an insufficient passage, that it was hours before the task was accomplished, and frequently the ultimate practicability of the scheme was doubted. At last a goodly flotilla was afloat in the Mississippi, far inferior, however, to the original design; and a force, under Colonel Thornton, of the 85th regiment,

was embarked to seize the American batteries, which had so sorely galled our camp; and thus, by paralyzing that arm of the enemy, to make a diversion in favour of the grand contemplated assault of the morrow. Colonel Thornton landed on the opposite side on the evening, or rather night, of the 7th January; and the following morning was fixed upon to storm the enemy's lines. Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Packenham had perfected his arrangements, and so soon as Colonel Thornton should fire the preconcerted rocket indicative of his success, a general attack upon the American position on our side was to begin.

The general orders had assigned to the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Mullins, and a body of the 44th regiment, the task of bearing the fascines and scaling-ladders in front of the attacking columns, to facilitate the passage of the fosse, and to allow the troops to escalate the works. It was doubtless a most dangerous service, and jeopardised that devoted party. Colonel Mullins not only thought, but said so openly. He declared "it was a forlorn hope, and that he and his men were to be sacrificed." Devoid of the noble daring of a soldier, and meanly skulking to save his own life, he failed to obey this order, and thus consigned the cause of his country to discomfiture. •

The Engineers had duly completed their task, but found no one ready to profit by their exertions. Colonel Mullins evaded his duty, and the fascines and scaling-ladders remained unclaimed. Sir Edward Packenham, never for a moment supposing that a British field officer could act so craven a part, had directed the advance against the enemy, and then the fatal truth transpired, in the helpless and ignominious fall of nearly 2000 men.

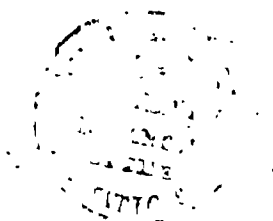
Sir Edward Packenham appeared, by all reports, to have been perfectly maddened by this unlooked-for calamity, and various tales were told of his passionate exclamations on the occasion. He was said to have threatened Mullins, personally, that he would "hang him on the first tree after the action;" and there is no doubt that his language and gesticulations betokened frenzied excitement. Still his gallant spirit quailed not under the emergency; he directed the troops with judgment, and led them with undaunted courage, only to meet a soldier's grave. General Gibbs, second in command, was also killed, and General Keane was wounded.

The American loss was trifling; and thanks to their use of "buck shot" (some cartridges containing no less than seven small balls, instead of one bullet), most of our wounded speedily recovered.

The narrow base for their operations, viz. from

the margin of the morass to the river, indicates, at a glance, the simplicity of the American mode of defence. A breast-work thrown across, protected by an occasional temporary redoubt, and the whole rendered more difficult of access by an artificial fosse, required nothing more than tenacity of purpose to contest our advance. If Colonel Mullins had really done his duty, and our soldiers had been enabled to exert their long-trying aptitude in storming fortifications, there would have been every hope of a successful result; since Colonel Rennie, of the 21st regiment, had actually made a lodgment in one redoubt; but for want of succour had been overpowered, and he and his party became the victims of a pusillanimity unheard of in the British army.

The entire failure was universally ascribed to Colonel Mullins, and he became the object of general vituperation and disgust. He was shunned and denounced by the whole army. Nor did his regiment, the 44th, escape the concurrent condemnation. They, too, were branded with their chief's dishonour. In this respect their position was painfully humiliating; for doubtless, if properly commanded, they would never have shrunk from their duty in the hour of danger; and the discredit consequently attached to them, though somewhat excusable under the joint dismay and excitement of the moment, certainly must, on reflection, have been unmerited.



CHAP. XVI.

CONDITION OF THE BRITISH. — NIGHT RIDE ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI. — GENERAL JACKSON'S TACTICS, AND CLAIMS TO HONOUR. — RETREAT OF THE BRITISH. — INDIAN ALLIES. — THE LAKES RETRACED. — CAT ISLAND. — RE-EMBARCATION. — THE MOBILE RIVER AND FORT BOWYER.

THE slain having been interred under the safeguard of a flag of truce, the army, now commanded by Major-General Lambert, remained in its original position, and the question next arose, What was now to be done? Gloom and anxiety were visible in every countenance, while angry comment and sinister foreboding alternately prevailed. Many believed that, considering the precarious means for retreat, our capture was inevitable.

About this period my friend Speer was immediately in advance, and sent a message to me to signify his desire that I should contrive to spend an hour or two with him. I sought for a well described barn, and found him in possession of snug quarters. I rode a horse that I somewhat vainly called "my own;" and after having chatted with Speer for two hours, I remounted to return to my own quarters,

near the negro hamlet, which we designated "Villeré," from the name of its proprietor.

My route lay by a road curving along the Mississippi with the indentations of the stream, which it seemed faithfully to follow; and although the night was dark and tempestuous, a glimmer of light occasionally tinged the surface of the river through opening clouds. My situation was at once novel and lonely; and I gazed with something like a feeling of awe upon the course of the mysterious tide, surcharged with filth, weeds, snags, and alligators.

Thus journeying I was hastily summoned to stand by the loud challenge of a sentry, who not only demanded "Who comes there?" but moreover required distinct intelligence of the corps, its commanding officer, and the name of the adjutant.

Suffered to pass by prompt answers, another fifty yards witnessed a similar challenge, and thus onwards incessantly from the advance to the rear.

There was something to me wild and interesting in this martial scrutiny. Recent bloodshed, the precarious tenure of our camp, its accessibility by the river, and the uncertainty that veiled the designs of the enemy,—all tended to impress my mind with the foresight and suitability of those precautions. Perhaps from some peculiar frame of mind at that moment, or the singularity of the whole scene, but

from whatever cause, memory often carries me back with unabated impressiveness to the well guarded line of the Mississippi.

We talk in domestic incidents of wide-spread consternation. Here it was fully realised. There no lack of determination, nor any despondency calculated to secure a tame surrender; but our situation had become doubtful and discouraging; and I am sure we had cause for thanksgiving, that we had not a Napoleon or a Massena to confront us.

Our bloodless exit after such a signal discomfiture is, in my opinion, calculated to detract from the character for enterprise of General Jackson.

His tame forbearance on such an occasion denoted a lack of chivalrous daring, little suited to the fame of a great commander, into which his countrymen have delighted to exalt him. He certainly availed himself of ready means to protect the city; but, with the exception of his first aggression, he took no one step to chastise his invaders, comparatively defenceless as they were.

At this particular juncture the British had been repulsed with great loss, and were naturally much discouraged; and, moreover, there was not a single feature in the aspect of the country, upon which they could rely for natural defence.

Our access to the point of debarcation had been

contracted and hazardous. We could never have succeeded in landing, had we been opposed even by paucity of numbers. But now that discomfiture, the loss in general officers, and our numerical sacrifice, had spread almost a panic through our ranks, the contemplation of the extraordinarily intricate route by which alone we could retreat, should, in my opinion, have invoked the hardihood of our opponents. This was the precise moment for enterprise, but it was suffered to pass away ingloriously unheeded. Here, I think, the reputation of General Jackson appears divested of the high qualifications with which his country has surcharged it.

The Americans continued supine, while we, at our perfect leisure, by means of the sappers and staff corps, laboured and successfully, to adapt the banks of the creek, with their reeds and swampy superficies, to the safe march of our soldiers to the fishermen's huts. The boats meanwhile conveyed as many as they could carry; and thus the entire force was withdrawn from the position before New Orleans.

My friend Speer, with a few artillerymen, remained behind during the night, to keep alive the camp fires, in order to beguile the enemy; and at dawn of day he decamped with his party; and it was only by slow degrees that the Americans at length became aware of our retreat.

Throughout our stay before New Orleans, and amidst all the danger, suffering, and daily excitement, our faculties of observation were kept awake, first by the contemplation of our grotesque allies, the Indians; and secondly by the hordes of runaway negroes who crowded our camp.

The first irresistibly invoked our attention by the strange habiliments of the chiefs. Our operations were aided by the Creeks, Choctaws, and some few of the Cherokee tribe, the first-named being the most numerous. They were under the especial guidance of Colonel Nicholls of the Royal Marines, who, it may be remembered, on the introduction of Viscountess Perceval, accompanied me to the Grand Depot on the occasion of my *début* at Woolwich.

His appearance was not at all improved by additional age and by active and disastrous service, for his enterprises had been unsuccessful.

He had lost an eye; and whether it resulted from his association with his wild Indians, or an affected singularity, or, as some averred, a slight aberration arising from numerous wounds, he certainly had contracted a fantastical deportment, and looked so strangely care-worn, that few could regard him without surprise and comment.

I renewed my acquaintance with him, when he urged me to accompany him in his singular mission.

Looking first at him and then at his Indians, I felt no ardent enthusiasm rise within me to test the nature of so novel a service; and I adroitly referred him to Colonel Dickson, expressing at the same time much doubt whether my services would be dispensed with. He professed his intention to speak to my commanding officer on the subject; but no sooner had I quitted him, than I hastened to find out Colonel Dickson; and having acquainted him, first with the nature of my acquaintance with Colonel Nicholls, (which made me averse from pronouncing a negative to his proposition), I secondly expressed my earnest desire to be spared the horrors of so questionable a service. The Colonel at once relieved my mind, by assuring me that he should object to my quitting his command.

Colonel Nicholls subsequently intimated that I could not be spared; and hence all danger of marauding and scalping was obviated, and my mind was relieved on those points at least.

The Indian chiefs had been arrayed in uniforms sent from England, as presents to them from the Prince Regent. Upon what principle of selection these habiliments were chosen it is hard to contemplate, for anything more ridiculous and ill-suited can scarcely be imagined. They resembled the full-dress jackets of serjeants of the Guards, to which huge

cocked hats were added ; and the exotic chiefs, some with rings suspended from their noses, chins, and ears, and many with feathers drooping from the hair, exhibited figures much better suited to a pantomime than to a camp. These singular personages strutted about us, equally the objects of merriment and surprise.

Their followers were numerous, and realised all our previous notions of this remarkable race. Many of them spoke tolerable English (from their casual intercourse with the Americans) ; and their tattooed bodies, wild deportment, but gentle manner, elicited our curiosity and sympathy. I remember an occasion on which their frail huts took fire, and the consternation that prevailed amongst them ; and the frank dependence which they all (females especially) reposed in our willing aid, won our utmost good will. Upon that occasion I assisted a matron, of medium age, in the removal of her portable effects, and got upon terms with the whole family that apprised me there was but a step well understood, between the savage and the civilised.

The mother was a fine woman, with a handsome countenance. She was so dexterously tattooed throughout every observable portion of the frame, that not a flaw was discernible in the lines and curvatures intended, doubtless, for embellishment.

Her daughter, at least seventeen years of age, was of graceful form, and equally with her mother was thus artistically decorated. There were several other children, and all bore marks indicative of their wild origin. They reposed childish confidence in me, and took my hand and answered to my caresses with all the eager playfulness of any other class of children. The mother spoke very good English, and reasoned upon the war we were waging, with more astuteness than could have been expected from a savage. The fire drove them from our immediate vicinity, and I afterwards sought to renew my acquaintance with them in vain. I saw them no more.

The runaway negroes, who hoped by our patronage to disenthral themselves from the rigours of slavery, were numerous and of all ages and marketable promise. Amongst them, again, I observed the everlasting buoyancy of animal spirits. They were good tempered, and unceasingly mirthful; and their intercourse with us betokened unlimited confidence. They were all removed with the army, and we afterwards saw in our future camp many who first became known to us before New Orleans.

During our short stay at the fishermen's huts, I stood casually by the margin of the creek, and listened to a colloquy between two soldiers, who

were busily engaged in washing some articles of dress in the stream.

One, an Irishman of the 85th regiment, asked his companion what he thought of "all these strange doings?" The other, scratching his head, replied he hardly knew what to think of them. The Irishman assumed a very knowing look, and, elevating his voice, exclaimed, "Ah, me boy, things would have been very different if Old Douro had been here!" This rude reference to the Duke of Wellington showed at once the soldier's confidence in him, and expressed a hasty but honest want of reliance in our then commanders. Certainly, the whole campaign was ill-omened, and appears to have been a combination of incompetency somewhere, and of misadventure everywhere.

I now attached myself to the company of Major Carmichael, R. A., and with them I entered the boats bound for the fleet. Before, however, quitting the fishermen huts, let me, *en passant*, remark that Captain Gordon, of the "Seahorse," (whose feat in the Potowmac has been previously noticed) had here exercised command. His activity, good humour, and kind deportment won all hearts, and many, as well as myself, were indebted to him for hospitality necessarily rude, though not the less hearty, at a naturally inhospitable spot.

We re-entered the boats, and retraced our path through this cheerless lake. In order to spare the time, and also to relieve the boats from uselessly pulling up against a head current, we were landed at the extremity of a small wild headland of "Cat Island." A single family, of Spanish origin (of whom we then knew nothing), inhabited this isolated spot; and it so chanced that, had we known of their occupation, and had sought their instructions, we might have traversed the island by a dry track. As it was, we marched along the margin of the lake, which proved to be the least practicable route.

For nine miles (the length of the island) we threaded a path beset with every dispiriting impediment. Deep inlets intersected our progress. The number we waded was countless. Sometimes the water reached my shoulders; and I was infinitely amused by the ceaseless jocose exclamations of Lieutenant Griffiths, of the Artillery Drivers, who followed throughout, immediately in my rear; and who (being short) set up the most ludicrous wail whenever he perceived me in depth and difficulty. Our march was certainly, at this inclement season, a most unwelcome one; but its incidents were at once encouraging and amusing. We plodded on buoyantly, amidst a combination of mud, moisture, and mirth, and exhibited a happy indifference to tempo-

rary inconvenience, which a high flow of spirits alone could have sustained.

Here, heretofore, and subsequently, I have experienced every species of suffering and privation ; but in the majority of cases I have found the animal spirits to prevail and sustain. Hence I have often reasoned on the endurances of the poor in civilised countries, and thus judging from my own experience, I have pleased myself with the conviction that they suffer much less comparatively, than those sensitively alive to their condition, would imagine. This I know, that, under the most adverse circumstances, I have ever been prepared to smile with the smiler, and have borne up against present difficulties with an elastic spirit.

Arriving at the extremity of Cat Island nearest to the fleet, we beheld our ships at anchor ; but a strong wind prevailing, we were constrained to bivouac for twenty-four hours, and pitched our rude encampment on a sandy eminence. We had with us one tent, and the men sought around them for materials for temporary huts. We had scarcely settled down into our new dwelling, ere we found the cold so insupportable that we determined to look around us for a more genial resting-place. A short survey disclosed the snuggest imaginable little valley, surrounded by pine-trees, and provided with a sandy footing. To

that spot we promptly repaired, and the change of temperature we experienced was as instantaneous as welcome.

Here we passed a most comfortable afternoon and night, and arose next morning quite refreshed after our soaking march. The head of the Spanish family I have noticed, found us out, and hospitably presented us a brace of wild fowl. These we cooked with our rude appliances, and eat them with a relish enhanced by the spontaneous good will of the island chief.

We learned from others, who had more providently essayed the inland path, that there were several dark-eyed maidens in this secluded family, who wore the bright traces of their mother country. Their lives must indeed have been of unsocial monotony; but it was a strange feature in these cheerless swamps, to meet with isolated dwellers who spoke respectively French or Spanish only.

The following day saw us boated to the fleet; and when the whole force had been re-embarked, and for the sake of celerity in the nearest vessels we could reach, we weighed anchor and sailed through an apparently deep channel, amongst uninhabited or deserted islands, towards the Mobile River. The men-of-war sought an external passage; but at length the whole force found suitable anchorage near the

entrance to the river, and contiguous to Fort Bowyer; a formidable battery constructed at the very extremity of a sandy point, for the defence of the port.

The stars and stripes of the United States streamed from the flag-staff, and active preparations were made to reduce that fortress. It was garrisoned by about 400 American troops, under a Colonel Lawrence; and must have been a formidable barrier to any intrusive stranger, seeing that previously to our arrival, a British frigate, under the command of the Honourable Captain Spencer, had been sunk by it, and Colonel Nicholls with his marines and Indians had been thence repulsed. Captain Spencer was now amongst us, divested by this casualty of his command.

The troops were landed and bivouaced on a soil of the deepest sand, which extended for some miles inland; and as during our stay smart gales prevailed, we were literally surcharged with its superficial clouds. We had landed some few tents; and if ever such receptacles were available, the Ordnance corps assuredly possessed them. It was, however, no easy matter to pitch, much less to sustain, them erect, and many and ludicrous were the consequent casualties.

I, aided by a runaway negro, named Moses, whom I had exalted into the office of valet, had with great industry, stuck the tent-pole, as we imagined, se-

curely deep; when lo! a tumultuous gust mocked our labour, in the middle of the night, and I was frightfully aroused from a deep sleep, by the conviction that hostile Indians had marked me for their prey. To shout, to struggle, and to disentangle myself were prompt incidents; and when we discovered the consoling though still uncomfortable fact the contest between us and the elements was long, and on our parts nearly ineffectual. However, we did at length repitch the tent, and were suffered to repose securely till morning. The worst part, however, of these fitful gusts was, that we could scarcely preserve an article of food free from grit; and altogether our position before Fort Bowyer was a most unenviable one.

At a very short distance from the fort, huge mounds of sand had accumulated, and by time and incessant addition had assumed some consistency. Here galleries were cut out and batteries planted, until a bristling demonstration warned Fort Bowyer of its inevitable fate. The fort sent forth its missiles incessantly against the working parties, while the armed detachments protecting the works, would immediately after each salvo, rush up the sandy hillocks, which overlooked the fort, and rattle away at the enemy to impede the reloading of the guns.

No sooner, however, had all been completed and

the fort summoned, than Colonel Lawrence, fully aware of the futility of further resistance, agreed to surrender, and stipulated solely for the garrison to march out with the honours of war.

This being accorded, a calm morning witnessed the evacuation of the fort by the Americans, with all the incidental pomp and parade. A regiment of British infantry formed a square contiguous to the beleagured fort, and the enemy, with colours flying and drums beating, moved with measured tread into its centre, and there laid down their arms. They were determined, however, to taunt the British in this the last throe of their evolutions, and they marched from the fort playing "The Exile of Erin."

We could not but observe a contrast, creditable to our own country; that, whereas the British were far distant from their native land, and paraded under circumstances the least favourable to complete order, yet they appeared with all the trim neatness so essential to effect — arms burnished, belts white, and pouches and shoes polished. The Americans, on the contrary, exhibited an ill-dressed and slovenly appearance, although at home and within easy access to a town capable of affording them all the appliances for comfort and cleanliness.

The fort exhibited the like absence of particularity in this respect, and received, at our hands, a thorough

cleansing, which completely changed its aspect. It was an unassuming mass, composed almost exclusively of wood, solid, compact, and capable of mounting a good array of heavy guns.

Scarcely had Fort Bowyer fallen, ere we received the joyful intelligence of the restoration of peace between the two countries. This information was received with unfeigned joy by the whole army, and all further dispositions to reduce and occupy Mobile were at once abandoned. England now became our prospective destination, but it was necessary for the fleet to have time to repair and refit for so long a voyage; and as delay, for that purpose, thus became inevitable, a neighbouring island "Isle Dauphine," had been selected for temporary occupation by the troops. All the military force, not required before Fort Bowyer, had been disembarked, ere we learned that we too were for a time to settle down in that wild locality. ..

We naturally became inquisitive as to the character of our island abode, and, at the instance of my friend Captain Deacon, I prevailed upon the good-natured skipper of the "Idas" to lend us his jolly-boat, with two sailors, to convey us across for an hour's inspection. Isle Dauphine was distant from Fort Bowyer about five miles, and appeared to us an easy row. Off, therefore, we set, and promising the two

oarsmen a small remuneration for their trouble ; we glided pleasantly through that portion of the estuary which was protected by the land, and where the gale from the gulf exercised a subdued influence.

No sooner, however, had we reached midway, and attained the wide mouth of the river, exposed to the unfettered breeze from the sea, than we found the wind to be boisterous, and the water convulsively agitated. Our cock-boat was tossed about, and became scarcely manageable. We shipped water, and could not fail to perceive that real danger threatened us. The sailors displayed the usual tact and courage of their craft, and struggled gallantly, and at length successfully, and we reached the island, not, however, without the firm conviction that our lives had been seriously imperilled. We were not displeased with our slight *reconnaissance* of Isle Dauphine, and returned to the main-land, with an impression in its favour. The mid-channel, when we again reached it, was still greatly agitated ; but the gale had subsided, and we were spared the recurrence of our recent alarm.

Before quitting Fort Bowyer, my adventurous friend Speer enticed me to join him in a shooting excursion inland. We walked far through pine forests ankle-deep in water, and were compelled to take landmarks to insure our safe return. We did not see a

single head of game of any sort; but became convinced that, had we gone thrice the distance, we should have found nought but the same hopeless prevalence of pine and puddle. We therefore retraced our steps, having reaped nothing but the experience of a swampy wilderness, calculated to send forth in due season pestiferous and wide-spreading exhalations.

A few days saw Fort Bowyer and its sandy precincts deserted by the British, and the whole of the land-forces disposed in a beautiful and orderly encampment on Isle Dauphine.

CHAP. XVII.

ISLE DAUPHINE — OUR CONDITION THERE. — AN ADVENTURE WITH
AN ALLIGATOR. — A RUDE THEATRE. — PERFORMANCES, ETC. —
ORDER OF THE BATH.

THE island was about five miles in circumference, well wooded; and contained a good beaten path from the upper end to the open sea. It had previously been occupied solely by a man and his wife. Patrick Rooney, an exile from the usual habitable portion of the United States on account of crime, murder it was said, was there suffered to exist. He had a small unadorned cottage, with such an inclosure and stock as suited his contracted means. He was civil and communicative, and related many strange anecdotes of his numerous neighbours the alligators.

An extensive marsh lying at an angle of his end of the island, seemed to be the main refuge for those formidable animals, and thence unearthly cries frequently assailed our ears at night. The coast was plentifully stored with oysters of good quality, and to such an inexhaustible extent that they proved abundant even to the last. This was a most providential resource; for not only were our rations

reduced to the well known nautical definition of "six upon four," but the provisions, limited as they were, consisted of the last refuse of the biscuit-bags (surcharged with small maggots and weavils), and the beef and pork were equally the last and discarded pieces, spurned in more prosperous times.

The truth was, that our commanders had so securely marked New Orleans for their own, that no care had been taken to provide for the present exigency. Doubtless the reserve provided by Nature mainly contributed to the sustentation and health of the troops; and the soldiers, instinctively alive to their own abundance, called this place "Oyster Island."

Nothing in the form of encampment could be more picturesque than the extensive and well designed disposition of this little army. Every commodious open clearance contained a goodly row of tents and marquees, while any deficiency in these respects was made good by neat huts constructed with materials from the woods. Where able handicraft prevailed, these last were remarkable for their exterior symmetry and internal convenience. Every regiment and corps had its allotted ground, and the *tout ensemble* bespoke an active intelligence more than adequate to the occasion.

The fleet was quietly, and as it proved safely (not-

withstanding occasional hurricanes) anchored in an unfrequented bay westward of the river, and a regular intercourse between it and the land was easily kept up. The British cruisers were alert, and it was owing to them that we were indebted for a supply equally welcome and purchaseable, since we had had no means hitherto of spending our money.

Not far from Isle Dauphine a Russian vessel laden with Bordeaux wine, and bound for New Orleans, had been spoken with; and no sooner was the nature of the cargo proclaimed, than the skipper was apprised of the ready market he would find at our island. No port dues or Customs' tariff would intercept his profits, and thus counselled he promptly sailed to our port.

His expectations were fully realised, and it became a curious feature in our beautiful encampment, to behold the numerous tents now furnished each with a pipe of claret. The precious vessel stood erect, and a gimlet and a quill travelled inch by inch downwards, until the contents of the cask were exhausted, and those auxiliaries became useless.

It may be remembered that, when we reached the Grand Cayman, after our departure from Jamaica, I spoke of the purchase of a Seine, or huge fishing-net, by our friend Speer. At that time we were

surprised at the singular bent of his mind, in wasting (as we thought) some fifteen dollars in so strange a bargain; but now we reaped by its means a harvest so rich and abundant, that we deemed its possession to have resulted from inspiration. Speer would assume the rudest garb of a fisherman, and toil for hours up to his waist in water, well seconded by artillerymen thus encouraged; consequently our mess was blessed with abundance, while less fortunate neighbours pined under comparative want.

A very singular catastrophe visited our friend. He had hauled in a good draught, and was handling and testing fish of various weights, when suddenly a species of plaice resented the affront put upon him, and stung Speer so severely in the arm with the sharp point of the tail, that he nearly fainted from the infliction, and carried his arm in a sling for at least three weeks.

What with our oysters, the supply of fish, and the rations combined, we could sit down to a table well supplied. Hospitality was consequently extended to others, and occasions arose when an unusual display of viands became desirable. I used to roam about with a fowling-piece, and frequently added to our repasts by the successful use of my gun; and upon one of such occasions, when two men of note were to grace our table, I was specially requested to use

extra diligence in my pursuit, and produce a dish worthy of our name.

I sallied forth, had shot some birds, and was still seeking for more, when a soldier approached me, and with some excitement communicated the fact that an alligator was reposing in the grass contiguous. I lost no time in drawing my charge of shot and loading with ball, and with the soldier for my guide, I came upon the spot where the ugly monster reclined. I carefully surveyed him, and was considering where to aim with the most deadly effect, when he suddenly darted away and plunged into a small adjacent pond. I and the soldier looked in every direction without effect, when a large bird perched upon one of the overhanging branches. To withdraw the ball, and to load again with shot, was the work of a minute. I fired successfully, and the bird fell into the water. Anxious not to lose so promising a *morceau*, I drew my ramrod, and from an overhanging branch sought to hook and secure it, when lo! the branch broke, and I fell headlong into the pond which contained the dreaded reptile, and which proved to be beyond my depth. The affright that seized me may be imagined. No luckless wight ever made such rapid efforts to emerge. Happily I got out quickly, and was unscathed. I looked wistfully at the floating bird, and notwithstanding my

recent misadventure, determined to make another effort to secure it. This time I well surveyed the bough to which I trusted, and at length succeeded in capturing my game. I was sufficiently recompensed by the encomiums bestowed upon the relishing dish I had provided.

The most remarkable feature in our sylvan residence was a theatre, of rude but commodious construction. A plot of ground was levelled, and part of it so sunk as to leave an elevation of some five or six feet for the stage. On each hand were "boxes" for the Generals and Admiral, and one for the ladies, of whom there were, notwithstanding our perilous service, a few. A spacious "pit," the seats whereof were formed of platform planks, lent by the Royal Engineers, constituted the principal accommodation for the audience.

Huge poles, elevated at regular intervals, and interwoven with branches, formed the inclosure, while the roof was a studding-sail of the "Royal Oak," of 74 guns. The stores of the royal navy, of the transports, and every available source, were ransacked to furnish materials for scenery, and the other requisite appliances; and so well did all combine to promote the general amusement, that at length a goodly structure was completed, and with it all the necessary paraphernalia, and there stood

erect a monument of rude design but industrial skill.

Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest, of the Adjutant-General's staff, was the principal director; and he and Lieutenant Steele, of the 43rd Light Infantry, were the scene painters; while Captain Haines, R. N., was the stage manager. All enlisted in the undertaking were zealous and indefatigable; and it was pleasing to see officers, arrayed as mechanics, hammering, sawing, planing, and painting, as though their livelihood depended upon their industry.

I became enrolled in this *corps dramatique* by a casual introduction to Colonel Forrest, who deplored the want of subordinates in the forthcoming drama. Most of those applied to, aspired to fill the chief characters; but few would condescend to fill the minor parts, and thus the whole scheme became endangered. Colonel Forrest made such an appeal in behalf of the general object that Captain Mullins, of the 7th Fusileers, who stood by, declared he was no actor, but that he would willingly become the prompter. He did so, and persevered to the last in that unenviable post. Thus encouraged, Captain Deacon and myself avowed our disposition to aid in any requisite capacity; and others soon following our example, a good practicable working corps was soon embodied and the performances commenced.

A sufficiently capacious space was railed off for the orchestra, and the regiments by turns furnished their respective bands. We begun with "Chrononhotonthologos," and I made my *début* upon any stage in the character of "Tatlanthe," a female's part well calculated for me or any other male representative, since the piece is an extravagant burlesque. Each individual was thrown for costume upon his own resources; and I had recourse to two good-natured women of Crawford's company, Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Preston, who not only proffered their wardrobe, but afforded me the requisite instruction for its use. Lieutenant Head, of the 93rd regiment, played the Queen; and we were said to have acquitted ourselves to the general satisfaction. The house was crowded.

We had amongst us several officers who were really good actors; and the "Heir at Law," "The Honey-moon," "Raising the Wind," "The Apprentice," and many other pieces were exhibited with really unbounded applause. Our best actors were, Lieut.-Colonel Forrest, Staff; Lieut.-Colonel Beattie, 7th Fusileers; Lieutenant Benson Hill, Royal Artillery (who subsequently quitted the army for the stage); Lieutenant Madden, 43rd regiment; Lieutenant Graves, 7th Fusileers; Captain Haines, R.N.; Lieutenant Farmer, 95th regiment; Lieutenant

West, Royal Engineers; Assistant-Surgeon Fraser, Royal Artillery; and some few others of less passing histrionic note.

Vocalists sung favourite songs between the acts, and I had the temerity to join our friend Captain Haines in "All's Well." Benson Hill sung repeatedly the comic song of "Bart'lemy Fair," and his drollery and bodily contortions elicited acclamations of applause. A picket of the 14th Light Dragoons had caught and slain an alligator; and Hill, availing himself of this capture, so cleverly introduced "The Halligator caught by the 14th Light Dragoons at Dolphin Island," that no effect could be more complete.

Here let me frankly avow that I was not at all impressed with my powers as an actor, and I congratulated myself that I had not been fated to seek a livelihood on the boards. I believe I played "Tatlanthe" tolerably well: there was some bustle in that character, and I had learned my part perfectly. Of Count Montalban, in "The Honeymoon," I fear I made a sad mess. The circumstances under which I assumed that character were peculiar, and certainly constituted a valid excuse.

The part had been allotted to Captain De Bathe, of the 85th regiment; and he had made himself perfect in it. His regiment, however, had been

suddenly ordered to embark, and was about to sail, when, during our rehearsal, and when the character had been assigned to me, the wind became dead foul, without a prospect of a change; and De Bathe suddenly appeared, with a heart yearning to figure in the comedy.

I willingly surrendered the part to him, and of course desisted from its further study, at a time when I was far from acquainted with the text. The wind unexpectedly veered round, and the 85th regiment sailed for England. Our encampment being at a distance from the port, I was quite unconscious of this fact, when, at six o'clock P.M. (our performance commencing at eight), I received a laconic note from Captain Haines, the Stage Manager, running thus: — "Dear Chesterton, — De Bathe has sailed; you will, of course, be ready"! To seize the book, and to walk about muttering the part of Count Montalban, were instinctive incidents. However, I could not master my part; and although Captain Mullins promised to do his best as prompter in my behalf, I went upon the stage so completely abashed by my conscious deficiency, that no tact or presence of mind came to my rescue, and I cut a sorry figure.

Early the following morning my friend Speer made a hasty rush into my tent; and awakening me with a view halloo, in the drollest imaginable manner

besought me to retire from the stage, or I should assuredly be damned. Instead of conceiving pique or offence, I laughed immoderately, and have never since forgotten that sudden inburst and comical denunciation. His strictures were well deserved, for I had acted vilely.

When we reflect upon the wild nature of our tenure, the disadvantages that beset our company, the shifts and contrivances to which we had to resort for scenery, decorations, and dresses, and yet recall to mind the brilliant success that crowned our exertions (and here I exclude myself from the category of the enlaurelled), it is not surprising that, at this distance of time, a participator in those scenes should love to dilate upon their details. The project was most successful, and the nightly crowds proclaimed the interest universally excited.

The pieces and the *dramatis personæ* were posted on the tent forming the office of the Adjutant-General; and whenever an officer was about to appear in a female part (as was the case with Lieutenants Hill, Head, Rose of the 43rd, and myself), the prefix of "Miss" to the names in the programme excited immense mirth.

The theatre was lent; for one night only, to the non-commissioned officers and soldiers; and some of

the former were deemed to have displayed considerable histrionic merit.

We closed the performances (on that strange stage for ever) with a supper to the whole *corps dramatique*. In our straightened circumstances, each individual provided whatever he could procure; and thus a plentiful, if not sumptuous, entertainment was spread out. That parting festivity was not the least pleasant of our association; and we finally separated (without having had even a passing altercation), with the most cordial sentiments towards each other.

I now look back with pride and pleasure to my enrolment in that island company, and sigh to think how few of those who strutted their hour on the stage, may at this time be engaged in the great drama of life!

We had our moments of anxiety; and especially when a wild war was raging between several regiments, whose arms were the pine cobs, then so abundant in the pine-woods around us. Mimic fortifications were raised, attacked, and defended with so much energy that, in the contest showers of these missiles were poured upon the belligerents, and serious bruises told a tale of active onslaught and valorous resistance, quite dangerous to the lineaments of some few of our "ladies."

Happily the countenances of two of our "belles,"

Lieutenants Rose and Shaw, were saved from disfigurement, and our solicitude was wasted.

At the time of our residence at Isle Dauphine we learned from England the institution of the military order of the Bath; and the mail announced the investiture of so many of the superior officers in our camp, that titles now abounded.

In the list of those thus decorated we found our Commandant, who now, as "Sir" Alexander Dickson, was deemed to have received a distinction not over commensurate with his merits. I still continued attached to his Staff, and hourly saw occasion to estimate his high qualifications.

The middle of March found us still at Isle Dauphine; but additional discomfort was our daily portion, for as spring advanced, those tormenting insects the mosquito and sand-fly increased, and alligators became more errant and bold. Patrick Rooney, the exile, informed us that the summer would see hundreds of monsters crouching in the grass; but he also affirmed that, unless casually trod upon when mistaken for fallen timber, they would not assail a human being on land. Certain it is, that we longed to depart, and soon had our wishes realised, after a residence at Isle Dauphine of between five and six weeks. Sir Alexander Dickson with considerate kindness allowed, as far as practicable, an

adjustment for the passage home, suited to the general desire, and consequently I found no difficulty in sailing to England, in the "Anne" transport, with my old sea companions of Captain Crawford's company, and other friends.

CHAP. XVIII.

DEPARTURE FROM DAUPHINE ISLAND. — HAVANNAH. — THE PROMENADE. — THEATRE. — MARKET. — VOYAGE TO ENGLAND. — A HURRICANE. — A SCILLY PILOT. — EVIDENCE FOR A LAWSUIT. — ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND. — EMBARCATION FOR BELGIUM.

EMBARKED, and once more breasting the Gulf of Mexico, we could not fail to note the influence upon the sea of the turbid outpourings of the Mississippi. An earthy admixture dimmed the crystal character of the ocean, and served to remind us of the discoloured stream we had so long and painfully contemplated.

Havannah was our next prospective haven; and in a few days we made the island of Cuba. Our skipper, albeit reputed a good navigator, had been so deceived by baffling currents, that he was completely at fault; and for several days we had been striving to beat to windward, under the notion that Havannah was on our weather bow. Fortunately we had the opportunity to speak a coasting vessel, when we happily were apprised of our mistake; and putting the helm a starboard, we veered with the

wind, and soon anchored under the *moro* of Havannah.

In due time landed, we explored every part of this fine city; and repairing to the American hotel, enjoyed luxuries for which we had long sighed. We remained at this port for many days, and during our stay visited the theatre (the largest I had yet seen out of England); and on a survey of the streets, square, churches, and environs, we had no hesitation in pronouncing Havannah to be the queen of West Indian towns. Its buildings of stone, spacious streets, and fine churches, denoted a care in its construction, which quite outrivalled the make-shift structures, we had seen in Jamaica.

Within one mile of the city was a place of promenade, which we found thronged every evening with carriages (principally calesas, or two-wheeled vehicles), and with cavalleros, mounted on mules or horses bedecked with the showy trappings of Spain. In the former were seated ladies in their best costume; and the *cortége* keeping a line, and continuing at walking pace as long as daylight endured, presented Hyde Park in miniature, by the measured circuit of the carriages intermingled with equestrians, the display of liveries, and the tasteful attire of both sexes. The site was of oval form, and well kept; and the groves that surrounded it, sent forth

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their odorous exhalations. There were few pedestrians, for street cabriolets, with well-dressed drivers, supplied strangers with the requisite accommodation. This was indeed a charming place of evening resort, prior to the opening of the theatre, which was nightly thronged.

On my way to this delightful promenade, I once had the casual opportunity to meet a herd of freshly imported African slaves, driven like cattle to water. They were all in a state of nudity; and these miserable beings betokening unspeakable dejection, extorted pity for their condition and execration towards the accursed trade.

The *moro*, on the opposite side of the harbour, at a distance not apparently exceeding 1000 feet, exhibited the external aspect of a redoubtable fortress; but it was so carefully guarded, that no European stranger (as far as I could learn) was allowed to approach it.

Most of us repaired on board our vessels to sleep, and until the last evening we found the officer of the guard polite and accommodating. On the last night of our stay, however, we experienced unlooked for difficulty of egress, and were obstinately referred to the Governor for permission to pass out. We made for the residence of his Excellency (who was in bed and asleep) in a body of some five or six; and arous-

ing him from slumber, held a colloquy, half peaceful and half angry, until at length, on our report that delay might prove fatal to our passage, he gave the necessary authority for our enlargement.

My knowledge of the Spanish language caused me to be selected to purchase our sea stock. Consequently, at an early hour of the morning, I repaired, accompanied by half a dozen artillery-men to the well furnished market, whose numerous stalls were kept by black venders. I had to make extensive purchases of fowls, yams, vegetables, and the least perishable fruit, and certainly I never before witnessed such eager and boisterous competition. I was so encircled and assailed by black women of masculine stature (strength of body and of lungs appearing to be indispensable qualifications in their calling) that I was almost stifled. Bunches of living poultry tied in half dozens by the legs, were thrust into my face by so many contending rivals, that choice became impossible, without something akin to armed resistance to insure it. I and my gunners were compelled to fight stoutly in order to ward off the invaders, and were forced to repudiate the laws of gallantry in our contest to secure free trade.

I was heartily glad to conclude my bargains and decamp from this rude seat of commerce. My purchases were all sent to the American hotel prior to

embarcation, and mine host was pleased to compliment me upon the advantageous consummation of my formidable task.

We sailed with placid weather from Havannah, which was but slightly disturbed even through the Gulf of Florida, until we arrived in the latitude of Newfoundland, when we encountered the most furious hurricane I ever experienced. Fortunately it blew seaward, and we had a wide expanse of ocean for our security ; the ship, however, became unmanageable, and not a sail could remain set. The helm was consequently lashed a-lee, and the vessel left to drive, while thick flakes of froth, produced by the action of the wind upon the surface of the waters, flew through the air as thick as a heavy snow-storm. The hurricane happily proved of short duration, some five or six hours witnessing its abatement, and the gradually expiring convulsion fined off into an ordinary and dangerless gale.

Whether this visitation had deranged the computation of the skipper (the disputatious John Scotland) I know not ; but, certes, he again proved to be out of his reckoning by a most unusual miscalculation of distance.

When, therefore, at the end of May 1815, we were suddenly boarded by a Scilly pilot, and were informed by him that those islands were within easy

reach, the surprise was as great to the skipper as to us all.

The news communicated to us by this pilot, of the escape of Napoleon from Elba, and of the formidable preparations making by the Allied Powers again to subdue him, caused amongst us the wildest interest and excitement. We threw our hats into the air, and shouted with the enthusiasm of those habitually accustomed to war, and who foresaw in these demonstrations a scope for further adventure, and hope of personal advancement.

The pilot was one of those blunt honest-hearted sailors, whose hands and countenance betokened fearless devotion to a perilous calling. The very precincts in which we encountered him in his tiny craft, showed how reckless the brave old fellow was of ocean turbulence, and that noble daring was common to the men of his hardy profession.

He had the sagacity promptly to discriminate between John Scotland the skipper, (who with his oily tongue besmeared any stranger with honeyed suavity), and ourselves; and the dear old Neptunian clung to us, and repudiated the skipper. The latter had seized the opportunity to denounce us, and to exalt his own virtues and forbearance. Still the old weather-beater saw through the fog-bank of assumed perfection, and without the aid of a tele-

scope, descried the true outline of land or breakers a-head. Consequently, he reposed confidence in us, and infinitely amused us by a *réchauffé* of John Scotland's discourse concerning us.

The skipper was at that time meditating a legal onslaught against poor Speer, whose impetuosity during the voyage had exposed him to serious legal retribution at the hands of John Scotland. He had, one night when overprovoked, lost sight of prudential considerations, and planted his fists so effectively into John's face as to make the blood spirt out over the front of his shirt.

Threats of law had been plentifully uttered, and the shirt, an evidence of the transaction, had been carefully guarded, when, as we were about to enter the harbour at Portsmouth, this ensanguined witness was by the skipper's special direction taken from a locker and hung upon the taffrail, as if to air; but in reality as a symbol of his hostile purpose. Enraged at this insolent demonstration, we ordered its instant disappearance on pain of consequences, and thus menaced, John Scotland assented to its removal.

The steward, an excellent creature, who equally with the whole crew appreciated the hateful character of John Scotland, shrewdly enabled us to witness the place in which the shirt was now deposited; and while the skipper was busily engaged in carrying his

vessel into port, Hutchinson (a surgeon of the Artillery) and myself, abstracted it from the locker. Seizing our opportunity and furnished with a 12 pound shot, we formed a small roll of it, with the shot as an accompaniment, and dropping the precious relic into the sea from the cabin window, thus satisfactorily deprived John Scotland of his chief evidence against Speer. So much was the skipper detested by his crew, that his lawyer must have used superhuman diligence to insure the attendance of a single sailor as a witness in his favour.

We entered Portsmouth harbour, only to be consigned to the Motherbank, under quarantine; but at the end of three days, we were released from this cruel thralldom. The skipper repaired on shore for orders from the agent of transports, and returned with the intelligence that we were to sail to Deal.

We heard from our confidential friend the pilot, that some adviser on shore (to whom John had given his version of his treatment) had counselled an application to "the Prince Regent's Office in Lombard Street," when Captain Crawford would assuredly "be deprived of his epaulettes."

As it was the first time anybody had ever heard of that office, and especially in such a locality and armed with such an authority, the announcement afforded us excessive merriment, and many a time

since has Crawford been jocosely threatened with "the Prince Regent's Office in Lombard Street." However, we arrived at Deal, there landed the men, lost sight for ever of the detestable John Scotland, and I took coach for London. I repaired to Woolwich, where I found the Grand *Dépôt* instinct with combustibile life, and the Royal Arsenal the scene of unremitted exertion. Vessels thronged its contiguous waters, each in turn receiving its deadly cargo. One after the other loaded and despatched, the ports of Belgium, especially that of Antwerp, daily received additional engines of destruction, and the unmistakeable symptoms of belligerent strife largely prevailed.

I found my name again enrolled for foreign service; and notwithstanding my three years' unintermitted employment abroad, I could only procure a fortnight's leave of absence; but that short disenfranchisement enabled me to rush into the country, and in its peaceful enjoyment I forgot, for a brief space, the turmoil of warlike operations.

At the end of that small respite I again repaired to Woolwich, and embarking for Antwerp reached that city by the Scheldt.

CHAP. XIX.

ANTWERP.—EFFECTS OF WATERLOO.—ROAD TO VILVORDE AND BRUSSELS.—THE CITY.—EQUIPMENT OF BATTERING-TRAIN — HORSES FOR DITTO.—THE ORGANISATION OF THE LAND TRANSPORT.—MIMIC ORDER OF THE BLACK EAGLE.—THE FRONTIER TOWNS BESIEGED.—PRUSSIAN EXACTIONS.—PRINCE AUGUSTUS.

TALK of excitement, tumult, crowds, and confusion : here there was no limit to any, or all. The attack of Napoleon upon the Prussians at Thuin and Fleurus, and his advance towards Brussels, had created a panic almost universal, and the inhabitants of villages and provincial towns, who had anything which they hoped to save by flight, had seized whatever transport they could command, and had decamped to any point remotely promising security. Antwerp seemed to offer the safest asylum, and I arrived there in time to witness the exhaustless throngs anxious to insure its safeguard.

The news of the wondrous battle of Waterloo scarcely cooled the ardour of the fugitives, and at such a moment I, conformably with orders, set out for Vilvorde. That village was scarcely accessible, so completely blocked up were the roads and the

canal. However I did reach Vilvorde, and had the good fortune to procure a billet in the neat cottage *orné* of an elderly French gentlewoman, who was an enthusiastic *royaliste*. Her house and pretty garden had remained undisturbed amidst the general *mêlée*, and in the blooming month of June both wore the air of exquisite peacefulness.

I cannot tell whence came the "Gazette" over which the old lady poured with such intense enthusiasm; but at breakfast she read it aloud to me, and wept so copiously over every passage which recorded the progress and safety of the king of France, that but for her kindliness and sincerity I should have laughed outright at her simplicity. Her handkerchief was continually applied to her eyes, and exclamations of "ah! mon bon roi" were reiterated with every fresh passage which described his adventures. During the brief space (two days) that I passed in that sweet retreat, I saw enough to impress me with the amiability and devotion (to what she deemed the cause of her country), of one of many thousands thus troubled by these fierce political contentions.

From Vilvorde I proceeded to Brussels; and although the battle was ended and the result well known, the road still continued blocked up and scarcely passable, so eager had been the efforts to re-

treat, and so difficult had it become to disentangle the innumerable vehicles that choked its passage.

Arrived at Brussels, confusion seemed worse confounded. The city was thronged by troops, strangers, wounded officers, and soldiers, and every sort of vehicle struggling for enlargement. Hotels, lodgings, and billets, appeared to be equally unavailable, and mere *cabarets* became desirable resting-places. And now, with wondrous celerity, we beheld novel preparations still for warlike purposes. Schuyts, or canal barges, were hourly arriving in quick succession from Antwerp, laden with a battering-train and all its countless paraphernalia.

Thousands of horses and cars had been engaged by the Commissariat as land transport ; and at the extremity of the city, where the canal first reaches it, the quays and circumjacent space were strewn with monster guns and their cumbrous munitions. Mortars and artillery of gigantic calibre, to the number of eighty pieces, were as quickly as landed forwarded to Mons, and the intermediate road witnessed the incessant passage to and fro, of cars laden with shot, shells, and ammunition. Under the able direction of Sir Alexander Dickson, who was specially appointed to command this immense battering-train, to co-operate with a corps of the Prussian army, celerity was the order of the day, and with unsur-

passed despatch the whole of this unwieldy force was united at Mons.

Even at this anxious period the Belgians, like their Parisian neighbours, were not insensible to the gay display which was daily, at the hour of promenade, exhibited in the park. The costumes of various nations, and the all-prevailing Cossack trousers imparted a singular effect to the general scene. The victory had been won and all the recent wild alarm dissipated ; the belles of Brussels consequently attested the minute love of taste and finery, which universally pervade the sex ; and the park was thronged with Brussels' choicest beauty. Some few slightly wounded officers, with their arms in slings, or moving on well selected crutches (for taste was observable even in this unusual appendage), lent a grace to this resistless thirst for public ostentation.

Sir Alexander had under his command several companies of artillery, and two of them—those of Mitchel and Carmichael—had just returned from New Orleans. Thus I had the happiness to be again on active service, with many old and esteemed companions. The present Sir Richard Henegan, Commissary of the Ordnance, exhibited talents and activity on this occasion, which extorted general admiration, and served to confirm the high opinion which his chief had formed of his merits in the Peninsula.

He has published a narrative of his observations in Portugal and Spain; and it is only justice to him to aver, that he presented a rare example of promptitude and arrangement, which never failed to rise with every fresh emergency.

The Field Train Department having been simply an auxiliary branch of the Royal Artillery, the credit of its exertions merged in that of the parent corps. An officer so accomplished and discerning as Sir Alexander Dickson could not fail to appreciate the usefulness of this department, disfigured as it undoubtedly was by the reckless extent to which the corrupt patronage of the day had distended it. It consisted of two elements,—active efficiency and utter worthlessness. Too numerous for its legitimate requirements, many of its members did little more than periodically to draw their pay. Such *pecus ignavum* was, however, generally known and despised, while others toiled with laudable zeal for the public service.

At this particular juncture the battering-train derived unspeakable benefit from the services of a field-train officer, named Joseph Bradley. That young man was one of the rare class of natural linguists, who by an intuitive faculty could master and become a prompt adept in any language. In Spain he was known to have spoken Castilian in its

utmost purity; and subsequently a short excursion into Holland, sent him back a proficient in the Dutch language; while an after-residence in Italy made him also an accomplished master of that unrivalled tongue.

Sailing from Woolwich with me, he expressed on our arrival at Antwerp an envious desire to speak French as I did. Of course, he had acquired some rudiments at school, and with that frail foundation an incredibly short intercourse with French people (or rather Belgians, who all spoke the French language,) made him a fluent conversationalist.

Day by day he displayed a miraculously rapid familiarity with the accent and idioms of the French tongue, and so quickly did he acquire even the gestures and national ejaculations of the country, that when the battering-train was groaning under the confusion at Mons, caused by thousands of horses and their drivers arriving in disorganised masses, Bradley would shout (he had Stentorian lungs), command, and vociferate in French so effectively, that he overawed the tumultuous "Bosmen" (for so the native drivers were designated), and enforced some rude kind of order.

Sir Alexander Dickson consequently invested him with the direction of this heterogeneous mob of *employés*; and the celerity and aptitude with which

he told them off into brigades, consisting of 100 horses each, with a proportion of drivers and a "brigadier" to each division, quite astonished the beholders. I do not believe I exaggerate when I estimate the horses hired for this service at 5000, each horse being paid at four francs *per diem*, and one franc *per diem* being allotted to each driver. Bradley's labour, and his efficiency to perform the task assigned him, must therefore be manifest; for ere long, system and due control were throughout observable, and every tongue bore testimony to Bradley's extraordinary exertions and marvellous success.

He was a tall athletic man, with a soldier-like bearing, and wearing a blue surtout, a cocked hat with a moderately flowing plume, a sword belted by his side; and being armed, moreover, with a well selected coach-whip with a thong of amazing length, he would stalk amongst those untutored Bosmen, and by his loud commands and stern deportment awe the least tractable into obedience. The battering-train, consequently, was soon in movable condition, and despatched portion by portion to the frontier towns, where Prince Augustus of Prussia, with an army of 30,000 men, invested numerous fortresses which Napoleon had left garrisoned behind him.

During the few days that witnessed our stay at

Mons an amusing and innocent hoax served to promote abundant merriment. Captain Deacon, R. A., had jocosely affected a German deportment, and had assumed the title of "Baron Decken." He had talked largely of lavish honours to be conferred by the King of Prussia, and had assigned to himself one of primary distinction. He was familiarly styled the "Baron Decken," and the joke was greatly relished.

It occurred to Lieutenant F. Bailey, of the R. A., to found upon this *soubriquet* a playful practical *divertissement*. He sketched on pasteboard an order of the Black Eagle, adorned by various artistic touches of the *crayon*, and surmounting it with an appropriate device, clothed it with blue riband, and fitted its trappings to the neck. A letter was prepared, in a well-simulated German style, as an accompaniment, and the whole was enclosed in a huge envelope, sealed with characteristic formality, and made to bear the outward appearance of a select official document.

The harmless plot was communicated to others, and at length a R. A. driver was selected who was likely to execute a comic mission with the requisite gravity. The driver, well mounted, and minutely instructed, dashed into the town of Mons from a contiguous village, and rushing under the

porte cochère, well paved, of Captain Deacon's quarters, pulled at the bell "as though he'd jerk it off its wire," and with hurried and solemn air delivered to the breathless servant the imposing missive.

Deacon, who was at home, and, equally with the domestics, electrified by this sudden *tapage*, opened the vast dispatch, and read in well-feigned French-Germanic phraseology, the announcement that his Prussian Majesty had been pleased to confer upon him "the Order of the Black Eagle" for the zeal he had displayed in furthering the equipment of the battering-train.

Deacon at once perceived and relished the joke, and took the earliest opportunity to appear with the eagle suspended round his neck. On many an after day this exhibition was repeated, and never failed to elicit bursts of laughter, and he preserved that fabulous decoration as a sample of playful pastime in a camp.

The fortified frontier towns, which we were about to besiege, were, with the exception of Givet on the Meuse, of a somewhat similar character. With glacis, fosse, and ramparts, more or less difficult of access, as the means of inundation were available, those defences encompassed plain, dull, and uninteresting streets, with usually a "place d'armes," or

square, of most unimposing pretensions. The inhabitants were simple, small-trading *bourgeois*, with some few gentlefolks, who maintained a rustic dignity, supported by very circumscribed property. The houses were mostly furnished with bomb-proof cellars, in which, during a bombardment, the terrified occupants took refuge.

Maubeuge, Landrécie, Phillipville, Marienbourg, and Rocroi were successively invested, and I may say of each, that ten minutes would suffice to effect the circuit of the inhabited portion of the town.

In this campaign we had reason to remember a country well-occupied by an enemy, whose means of subsistence were drawn from any available source. Every hamlet and village, however insignificant, was overrun with Prussian troops. Each farmhouse and *château* was equally invaded, and not an inch of the land could boast of exemption from spoliage. The Prussians had brought with them faithful memories of the exactions of the French army under Napoleon in their own land, and, devoid of the generosity to distinguish between the active and passive agents of desolation, they inflicted upon a conquered people a frightful amount of retribution. The terrified inhabitants were despoiled and scourged mercilessly, and not a *sou* was ever paid for any sort of contribution.

Prince Augustus, the Prussian commander, was a young man under thirty years of age. He was tall, possessed a soldier-like bearing, and was distinguished by the most polished manners. We frequently came in contact with him, and nothing could exceed his courtly demeanour to everybody.

CHAP. XX.

MAUBEUGE BESIEGED AND TAKEN. — LANDRÉCIE. — A PARLEY
 PRIOR TO SURRENDER. — BOURBON PRINCES. — CONVOYS. — HALT
 AT BEAUMONT. — ULTRA KIND TREATMENT THERE. — BARDENÇON.
 — A FEMALE FATIGUE PARTY. — BOSSU AND ITS DIFFICULTIES.
 — SIEGE OF PHILLIPVILLE. — MARIENBOURG. — ROCROI. — GIVET
 THE REDOUBTABLE. — PEACEFUL RESIDENCE AT DAUSSOIT.

I LEFT Mons for Maubeuge with the present Sir Richard Henegan, and a very sharp ride brought us in two hours under the walls of the besieged town.

The battering-guns had been placed in position by the British, and were forthwith served by the Prussian Artillerymen. It was remarked that the French guns on this occasion were directed with faultless precision, but the shells had been furnished with fusees of undue length, which, happily for the besiegers, broke short off in their fall into the centre of the batteries, and thus the promised devastation was frustrated. A few hours' bombardment served to indicate the uselessness of resistance, and the fortress capitulated. By some arrangement with the Government at Paris the French garrisons were

marched off to "the Army of the Loire" as they successively surrendered. That same evening saw us *en route* for Landrécie, whither other portions of the battering-train had preceded us, and two days sufficed to witness the perfection of the requisite armaments for the reduction of that little town.

The scene that preceded its surrender was unusually interesting. Prince Augustus with a brilliant staff, Sir Alexander Dickson with his attachés (my humble self amongst the number), had assembled at a point from which the bombardment could be most advantageously observed. The first salvo from the besiegers was answered by a flag of truce from the town, and forthwith a superior French officer, with two subordinates, came out to parley with the prince. They approached with all the obsequious politeness of their nation, and requested time to consult "*les magistrats*," as to the surrender of the town. The Prince expressed surprise at such a proposition, when the French spokesman exclaimed, "*Mais vous sentez bien, mon Prince, que nous ne pouvons pas forcer les magistrats de rendre la ville s'ils ne veulent pas.*" The Prince, elevating his voice, and throwing up his head instinctively, exclaimed, "*A Messieurs, faites mille complimens de ma part aux magistrats, et dites les que j'ai cinquante obus ici, qui savent parler beaucoup plus haut que moi.*"

The envoyés from the town returned with their answer, and forthwith the fortress surrendered.

We entered into familiar conversation with the two junior French officers, and heard from them, as a palliation for their defection from the Royalist cause, tales of the insolent demeanour of the Bourbon princes. They related a story of the Duke de Berri, having in a rage snatched the epaulette from the shoulder of an officer, who, in consequence, carried his complaint to the King himself, Louis XVIII. The King, whom they represented to be a mild and kindly disposed man, expressed his regret for such an outrage, and advanced the complainant forthwith to the rank of captain.

We now began to experience the novel mode of march and transit under the denomination of "convoys," and had to supervise a line of waggons, each drawn by four horses at least. A convoy would sometimes occupy a length of two miles, certain distances being guarded by artillerymen, and the whole exhibiting a regular extension of semi-military formation, which the general peaceful character of the country alone secured from molestation. These convoys, to convey the munitions to various towns about to be attacked, became so numerous as to tax the superintendence of the whole British auxiliary force. The fortified town of Avesne saved us the trouble of

siege operations by the explosion of a powder magazine. It was almost shaken to atoms, and when we passed through it, the shattered windows and tottering houses, together with the anxious and careworn faces of the inhabitants, told too forcibly the tale of desolation to leave a doubt as to the agonizing character of war when brought to the homes and hearths of unoffending citizens.

We halted at Beaumont, a town planted on the apex of a commanding hill, from any side of which a wide-spread extent of country could be surveyed. The fortifications had, by earlier treaty, been destroyed, and the debris of its former strength lay scattered but unremoved. Here, for special purposes, I halted for some days, and was left to direct the onward progress of successive convoys. At this small town I obtained a billet at the simple but neat residence of two old maiden ladies, whose ages I should estimate respectively at seventy-five and seventy years. The helpless couple had wept over the stern exactions of the Prussians equally with their neighbours, and no sooner, therefore, did I present my billet, and they learned my nation, than they uttered a cry of wild delight, and received me with affectionate enthusiasm.

I often smile at the reminiscence of their kindnesses and caresses. Never, since I left my mother's

home, had I been so petted and indulged. Whenever I entered the house, the maiden sisters would force me to be seated, and lavish upon me the most extravagant fondness. They would conjointly smooth my hair with their hands, pat my cheeks, and call to their aid every endearing epithet that could denote their affectionate interest in me. "Mon cher enfant," "mon brave petit garçon," "mon ange," and still more beneficent terms, would be showered upon me, and I was invited to partake of every kind of refreshment which it was in their power to offer. In short I was a spoilt child in their hands, and for a few days revelled in the extreme of maternal solicitude. This enviable condition was not, however, destined to last, and a move two leagues onwards towards Phillipville (the fortress next to be invested) was my lot. To Barbençon I consequently repaired, and there we occupied barns, and stored them with every species of munition for eventual supply.

With rare exceptions, the country we had traversed was flat and destitute of all scenic interest. Occasionally we would light upon spots of rural comeliness, and feast our eyes upon neat residences enriched by horticultural adornment. The general aspect of the country, however, bore a dull, uninteresting character, unrelieved by hedge or fence of any artificial kind.

At Barbençon, when the siege of Phillipville was the object of preparation, a requisition had been served on the authorities of the commune for a supply of labourers to assist in the fatigue duties which the occasion necessitated. We were now, however, late in July, and the peasants and farm labourers were engaged in seasonable agricultural pursuits, and it was difficult to procure men without serious injury both to the farmers and to themselves. On the morning, consequently, of the appointed service, I repaired to the dépôt, and found, in lieu of labourers, a numerous assemblage of volunteer female substitutes. Due explanations induced us at once to accept the exchange, and the women toiled with such hearty goodwill, and were so sprightly and jocose as they performed their unusual tasks, that not only was the work well executed, but good humour and witty sallies tended to cheer and enliven the whole process.

Barrels of gunpowder, huge shot and shells, and cases of combustible stores, were so dexterously transferred from the magazine to the cars and wag-gons awaiting them, that, although the labour extended from six in the morning till the same hour at evening, there was no relaxation in their exertions, and the women toiled with such genuine alacrity that I am sure we were greatly benefited by the

exchange. The burthen of their conversation was detestation of the Prussians, with exhaustless sallies in praise of the English. One young woman, of robust frame and with a pretty face, was engaged in lifting 24-pounder shot from the piles to the cars, and she kept up such an incessant volley of ejaculations, "*Je deteste les Prussiens, c'est une villaine nation,*" that it was impossible to forbear to laugh at her cordial enmity and its untiring reiteration. With these cheerful allies the work was most satisfactorily completed, while their male supporters were thus enabled to earn the wages upon which the common subsistence depended.

A few miles from Barbençon the trains had to traverse a village called Bossu, which was most appropriately named. The distant aspect of the country bespoke the apparent changeless absence of hill and dale, but here we came suddenly upon a steep and precipitous descent, and a small and muddy intermediate tract, with a few scattered miserable huts on either hand, conducted us to the "*opus et labor*" of the opposite ascent. At this point we encountered all sorts of casualties; waggons were upset, battering guns on their huge carriages defied the resistance of their wheelers, and went with ponderous acceleration to the bottom; horses were maimed and disabled, and distress largely predomi-

nated. Once righted in the hollow, still the toil and straining to crown the upland were appalling, and heavy rains having wrought innumerable ruts and fissures, forty horses could hardly succeed in redeeming one solitary gun from the slough of despond.

Between Bossu and Daussoit (a large and populous village, two miles distant from Phillipville) the transit of the train had so completely ploughed up the road that nothing short of Herculean labour could extricate the guns from the mud in which they were embedded.

Perseverance triumphed at length, and Phillipville was duly invested and summoned. Here, however, the resistance became obstinate, and the town did not surrender until it had endured a bombardment of fourteen hours.

I have reason to remember that siege, for riding with my friend Bradley, we sought to survey a portion of the enemy's works not assailed by the fire of the besiegers. We had taken up our position, and in order more leisurely to scan that part of the town's defences, I had alighted from my horse, and while holding him by the rein, and resting myself against the saddle, a shell, hurled at us from the ramparts, descended within so short a distance of us that I and the horse were equally startled, and both

gave an involuntary bound. At that critical moment the horse trod heavily upon my foot, and what with the dread of the yet burning shell and the pain inflicted on my foot, I was in a torture of suspense and agony. I contrived, however, to remount, and both of us, idle interlopers, galloped off, fully impressed with the folly of a useless reconnoissance, and the peril from which we had hardly escaped unhurt.

Mariembourg and Rocroi both were in turns invested, and each in succession surrendered.

One fortress now alone remained to complete the task of subjugation, but that was the redoubtable Givet, with its formidable adjunct, the fortress of Charlemont.

Prince Augustus had effectually cut off all egress by a cordon of Prussian troops; but at that moment the deposition of Napoleon, and the restitution of Bourbon authority, had combined to render the French commandant of Givet accessible to terms.

When I visited Givet, the stipulations had advanced no further than the condition that the gates of the town should be open to general passage, while the fortifications of Charlemont, looking down upon Givet from an elevation at once formidable and menacing, should remain in possession of the imperial garrison, until final instructions for its transfer should arrive from Paris.

The country around was, if possible, more open and unadorned than the districts we had left behind us; but the Meuse flowing in a more imposing stream, at the very base of the fortress, and, in fact, passing through the town, and dividing it into two parts, served still more to fortify a spot contiguous to Germany, which the efforts of engineering science had rendered impregnable. The merest casual survey excited congratulation that circumstances had favoured a peaceful surrender of this bulwark of the frontier of northern France.

The head-quarters of the battering train continued at Daussoit for some weeks. In its vicinity coursing, and shooting, and visits to the surrounding places of any note, became our amusements. I rode to Thuin, seven miles distant from Daussoit, to purchase a pointer, for which I paid five Napoleons; and I also rode to Mons (at least thirty miles distant) and back, in order to furnish myself with a fowling-piece. Thus provided, I scoured the surrounding country, and sometimes wandered into the very forest of Ardennes. We had frequent soirées, principally at the quarters of Major Mitchell; and there our friend "Baron Decken" appeared nightly, adorned by the "Order of the Black Eagle."

CHAP. XXI.

THE PRUSSIAN IN FRANCE. — THEIR ARMY — MARCH TO NAMUR,
AND THENCE TO BRUSSELS. — THE DESIGN AND ITS DETAILS. —
RODRESSES. — FRENCH ANTIPATHY TO ENGLAND — ITS QUALIFICATION.

IN the progress of these operations we necessarily became acquainted with the exterior bearing and tactics of the Prussian army. There was but little intercommunication between the British and Prussian officers. The former regarded with pain, and often with indignation, the dire retribution inflicted upon the unoffending French people, and which, in fact, indisposed the British to seek any very familiar intercourse with the Prussian force. When those officers, on some few occasions, learned our views upon this point, they remarked upon the very different sentiments which must agitate the minds of the two nations. Doubtless, on maturer consideration, we should, in all probability, have reasoned otherwise than was our wont, had we, like the Prussians, seen our native country plundered and devastated, our homes desecrated, and the feelings of our families and kindred outraged. But, nevertheless, we could

not help contending, that, although it might have been just and righteous to retaliate upon the actual perpetrators of such enormities, there still was some forbearance due to those who had had no participation in the scenes of rapine, thus hourly revenged.

Few armies could boast of a finer appearance than that of Prussia. The cavalry was superbly equipped, and the infantry drilled into the very perfection of steadiness and simultaneous action. Individually, the Prussian soldier exhibited a bearing so stiff and erect, especially when in the presence of an officer, that he was rigidity personified. A very good effect was produced, especially when troops were drawn up in line, by the practice of padding the jackets in front, and thus imparting to the whole an exterior perfection undisturbed by occasional individual malformation. The coats of the officers, set off advantageously by the shoulder-straps (since introduced into the British army), with, on state occasions, the silver and gold sashes, having large, highly wrought appendages of the same rich materials, formed a *tout ensemble* of gorgeous aspect.

We noted, however, with wonder, the apparent exhaustless extent of England's liberality, for the trousers of many of the Prussian soldiers, when turned up at the legs in dirty weather, exhibited the notorious "broad arrow," indicative of English make ;

while the muskets of several regiments bore the Tower mark. What was the precise nature of the terms of our alliance with the Northern powers, I know; not but to all outward demonstration, the British were the universal purveyors and paymasters. With profuse generosity, Great Britain also paid, for the thousands of horses attached to the battering-train, four francs per diem for each horse, besides supplying them with forage. With the exception of the hardy little horses of Ardennes, they were wretched animals, and most of them purchasable for from 200 to 250 francs; consequently, two months' hire would redeem the original cost, and the remaining three months or more (for they were in requirement nearly six months) was a gratuitous waste of money, besides leaving the *entrepreneurs*, as they called themselves, in possession of the whole property in fee.

An officer, who confided his secret to me, was scandalously plundered by one of these *entrepreneurs*, named Vanderdoot, a Dutchman of great bulk, and with a pleasing address, disguising beneath it a deal of knavery. The dupe bought one hundred horses, which were put into this profitable service in the name of Vanderdoot, who not only neglected to pay the proceeds to the real owner, but ultimately robbed him of the whole hundred horses also. He laughed

in the face of the despoiled functionary, knowing that he could perpetrate such a piece of rascality with impunity, since the latter was compelled to observe a discreet silence.

I was directed to accompany two artillery officers (Chalmers and England) from Mons to Namur; where the Prussians had their park of artillery. There we were joined by Lieutenant Charlton from Brussels, who had thence conducted the share of the brass guns, captured at Waterloo, allotted to the Prussians; from whom, in turn, we were to receive the *caissons* (ammunition-waggons), long, narrow, and with semi-circular tops opening upon hinges. It was curious to observe the hearty delight with which the Prussian artillery officers beheld this honourable spoil. Some of them rubbed their hands, and laughed aloud in the plenitude of their satisfaction.

Our road to Namur lay through Fleurus and Ligné, the scene of Napoleon's victory over Blücher. At the latter place we contemplated the ruinous effect, upon the population, of the Emperor's expedient to dislodge his enemy, by firing the village at the moment when a strong wind blew against their front. The charred or prostrate cottages still remained to attest the fierceness of that conflagration; and the miserable inhabitants, who still clung to

their native locality, exhibited a destitute, nay, pitiable condition. The women dilated with mournful earnestness upon the scenes they had witnessed, and showed us the countless tumuli indicative of the buried slain. These are, in reality, the most eloquent commentaries upon war, tending to strip it of its meretricious gloss, and to impress the beholder with its real deformity.

At Namur, I was assigned a billet at the house of a respectable *bourgeois*; and, according to the custom exacted by the Prussians, I was surprised by the spontaneous supply of a cup of coffee early in the morning, and, according to the prevailing continental habit, a substantial *déjeuner à la fourchette* at about ten o'clock. A respectful inquiry was made as to the hour I desired to dine, when a nice repast, with a bottle of *vin ordinaire*, was set before me; and all this gratis, and, seemingly, as a matter of duty. For three days I enjoyed this liberal treatment, which, in this case, cost me no compunction; because there was a substantiality in all around me which testified to the ability of my host to incur this expense without any probable inconvenience.

Having exchanged the guns with the Prussians for the British share of caissons, we took possession of so large a number, that, as each was drawn by four horses, our line, when extended, was more than a

mile in length; and Lieutenant Charlton and myself conducted this charge to Brussels, by Quatre Bras, Gemappe, and Waterloo. The strife at these respective famous localities had been too recent, and had left too many memorials, not to create in our minds the deepest interest; and our long train, and the gunners, its escort, brought out the astonished inhabitants, who became reminded of the living masses and hostile array which had but lately so affrighted them, and rendered their hearts and homes desolate. It is hardly possible to conceive the looks of inquiring apprehension which our cavalcade excited.

We reached Gemappe at close of day; and having parked our caissons, and planted our sentries, we repaired to the house of the Mayor, who, in delivering to us a billet, informed us he was that evening to give a ball to the *Commune*, and politely invited us to join in it. Deeming ourselves very fortunate to have alighted upon such a festivity, we assumed the fullest costume in our power, and hastened to the inn, the appointed rendezvous. A glance, however, at the exterior greatly moderated our satisfaction, since it merely answered the description of a *cabaret*; and we could just hear the sound of a single fiddle. Our first misgiving was more than confirmed on a closer inspection, for a room of contracted dimensions was filled with tobacco smoke, and the people who

were moving on "the light fantastic toe" had all the appearance of mere rustics. Charlton could not disguise his disgust, and we both hastily beat a retreat, not a little chagrined at the time we had wasted on personal decoration. On reflection, however, in so unpretending a town, under ordinary circumstances also so devoid of genteel elements, and with a vicinity rudely agricultural, what else could we expect but a congregation of the least imaginable style or polish?

The following day we led our convoy through the redoubtable field, then pregnant with the manifestations of conflict much too recent to have become effaced. We saw no inquisitive strangers, but all was still; and until we crowned the northern upland, and entered the village of Mont St. Jean, scarcely a human form was discernible. Although the battle of "Waterloo" has a much more imposing sound than that of the village just named, the former has unquestionably the chief claim to found the designation. That, I think, must strike every one who surveys that arena of imperishable renown; but at the period of which I am writing, before there had been time for the consolidation of the world-wide fame which followed that mighty victory, the impression was much more likely to predominate. The door of the church of the village of Waterloo was open, and we beheld some few monuments to fallen British offi-

already erected, and workmen busily engaged in fixing others. With all these absorbing objects momentarily diverting our attention, we still progressed with our charge, and ultimately delivered it over to the proper authority at Brussels. My course was thenceforth wide apart from that consignment, but I never could learn what had become of those apparently useless caissons, which cost the British nation no inconsiderable amount of money to secure and transfer from Namur to Brussels. I have since widely inspected the intricacies of the repository and depository of Woolwich, but never could espy a particle appertaining to that costly capture.

While walking through the streets of Brussels, I chanced to meet a military friend, Mr. W., who informed me of his very recent marriage, and invited me to dine with him that very day. I accepted the invitation, and, repairing to his residence at the hour appointed, was introduced to the bride, a very pretty Frenchwoman, who was *assez spirituelle*.

In a few moments I discovered that the lady could not articulate a syllable of English, while her husband was ignorant of the simplest rudiments of the French language. Their looks seemed to be the only interpreters of their mutual devotion; but when, in the course of conversation between the lady and me, who were almost constrained to maintain an ex-

clusive conversation), there arose an ever-recurring necessity for interpretation, I was not a little amused at the requests on either side to explain the reciprocal compliments. The climax of this interlude was, that I was requested by the gentleman to tell his bride he would "not exchange her for a princess." This ill-assorted *ménage* resulted, as I learned some years afterwards, in dissension and separation; and the discarded lady pursued her husband into England, and exacted from him a heavy retribution for the folly of his too sensitive infatuation.

I returned to the head quarters of the battering train, where quietude was now the order of the day, and coursing and shooting the pastimes. Strange to say, the former, although in an open flat country, was not unattended with a danger scarcely known, I should imagine, in England. When galloping after the hounds, your course would be suddenly impeded by a chasm some ten or twelve feet wide, from which you looked down into a sunk road, at times as much as twelve or fourteen feet deep. These roads were common in the north of France, and were constructed for the transit of manure and agricultural produce. What necessity existed for those hollow ways I never could divine, but certainly they presented no aspect of danger to the French themselves, who, in those

days at least, were not addicted to rush, like the British, impetuously across the open country.

Our camp was followed by numerous female traders, principally young women, whose designation was that of "*bodresse*." They came from a small frontier town called *Binge*; and, carrying on their backs deep capacious baskets, supported by the aid of broad straps, they sold tea, coffee, and sugar, lemons, tobacco, and sometimes stuffs. They would walk endless distances without apparent fatigue, and carry loads heavy enough to strain the backs of coal-heavers; and, in the midst of all this toil and industry, they maintained irreproachable characters. They seemed always gay and light-hearted, were gentle in deportment, and fair in their dealings; and constituted an intelligent and interesting class.

The Prussian officers wore, with their undress surtouts, light caps with a peak in front, and protected from the weather by oil-skin covers. The ease and comfort of these caps being apparent, they were soon adopted by the British officers, who were consequently frequently mistaken for Prussians. Under the influence of this belief, the ragged urchins who so numerously lined the roads contiguous to hamlets and villages, would run by the side of our horses, and, tumbling over head and heels under the

hope of levying a sol or two, shout out, as they imagined, for our delectation, "*Vive le roi de Prusse!*"

At the period when this want of discrimination prevailed, we used at times to ride from Daussoit to Phillipville, distant about two miles; and upon one such occasion I emerged singly from the town, and beheld on the glacis a French inhabitant busily amassing the fragments of shells which had burst and scattered during our bombardment. I approached, and addressing him on the ordinary topic of the weather, &c., our conversation thence launched into the recent siege, and the general events of the war. The *bourgeois* fell into the prevailing error, and mistook me for a Prussian; consequently, he was unrestrained by any delicate forbearance towards England, but launched out into such a tirade of abuse against her, attributing all the misfortunes of France, and, indeed, of the whole world, to what he termed her treacherous policy, that I became highly amused, and not a little interested in the *dénouement* of our conference. At length, when the Frenchman had quite exhausted his vocabulary of disgust and depreciation, I ventured to remark, that I was sorry to find my own nation held in such disparagement by the French people. The shock was instantaneous. The sense of politeness, so indisputably appreciated by most Frenchmen, was painfully outraged, and the

poor fellow's face betokened real distress and embarrassment. His frame seemed to be agitated by the awkwardness of the discovery, that it was to an Englishman he had been thus traducing the British government and people. Some personal compliments upon my French idiom came to his rescue, and he did his best to make the *amende honorable*. I left him with the remark, that national antipathies need not extend to individual intercourse; and applauding that charitable sentiment, my companion made me a very polite bow, and we parted with every demonstration of outward amity. In those days of strong national prejudice, I never failed to observe that, however inimical Frenchmen might be to Great Britain as a rival power, the utmost suavity stamped their address and discourse towards individual Englishmen.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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